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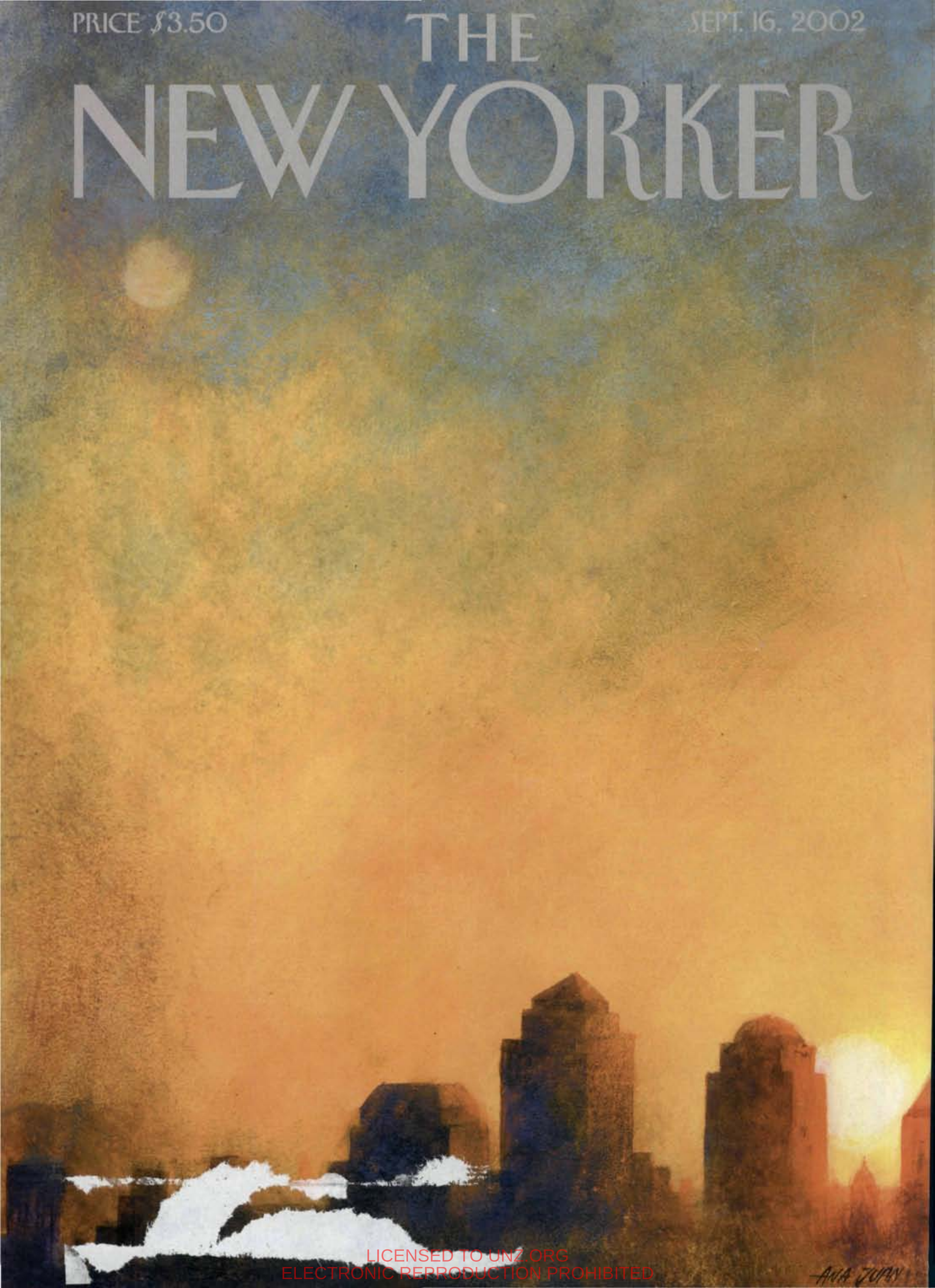
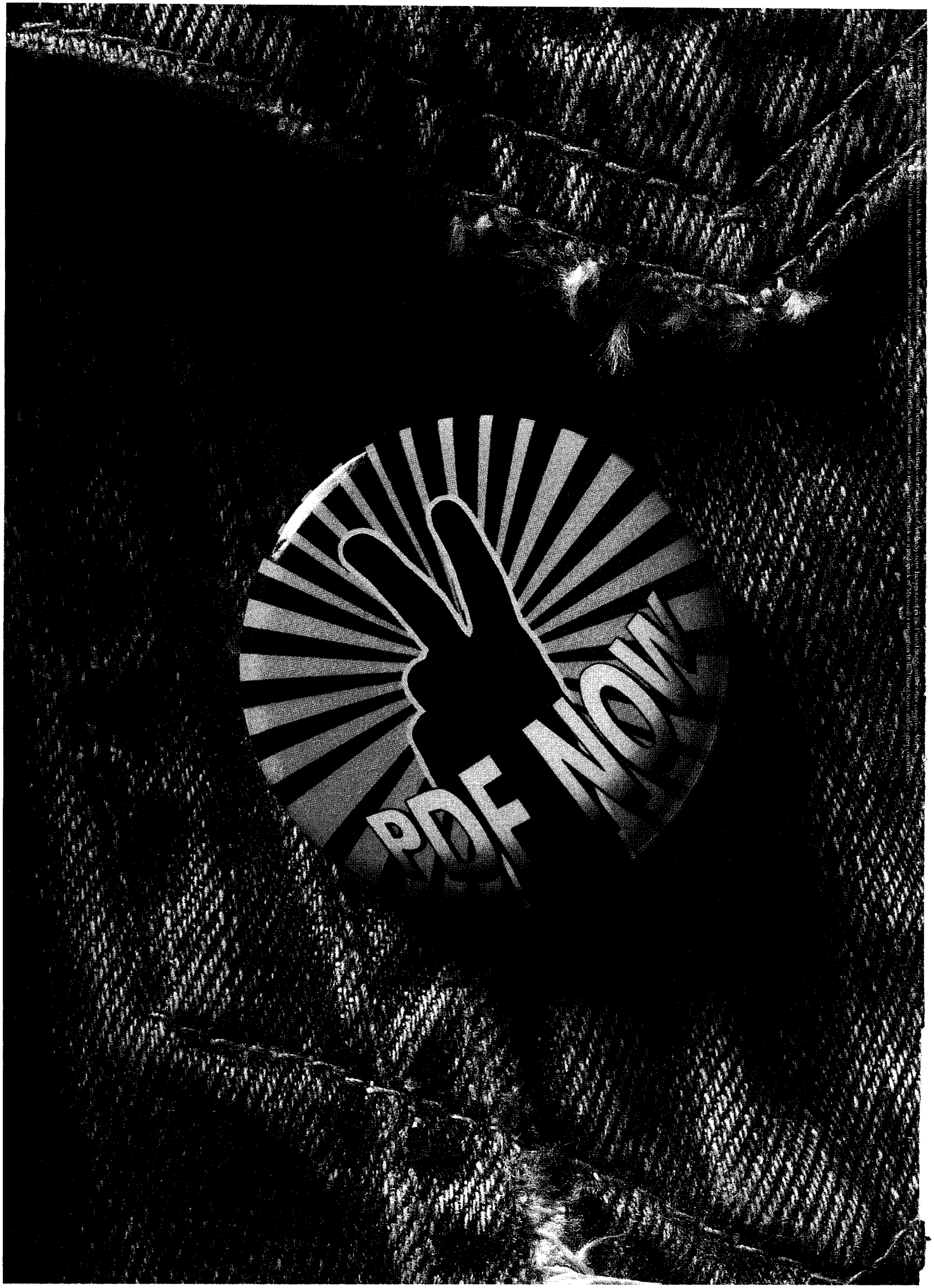
SEPT. 16, 2002

THE NEW YORKER





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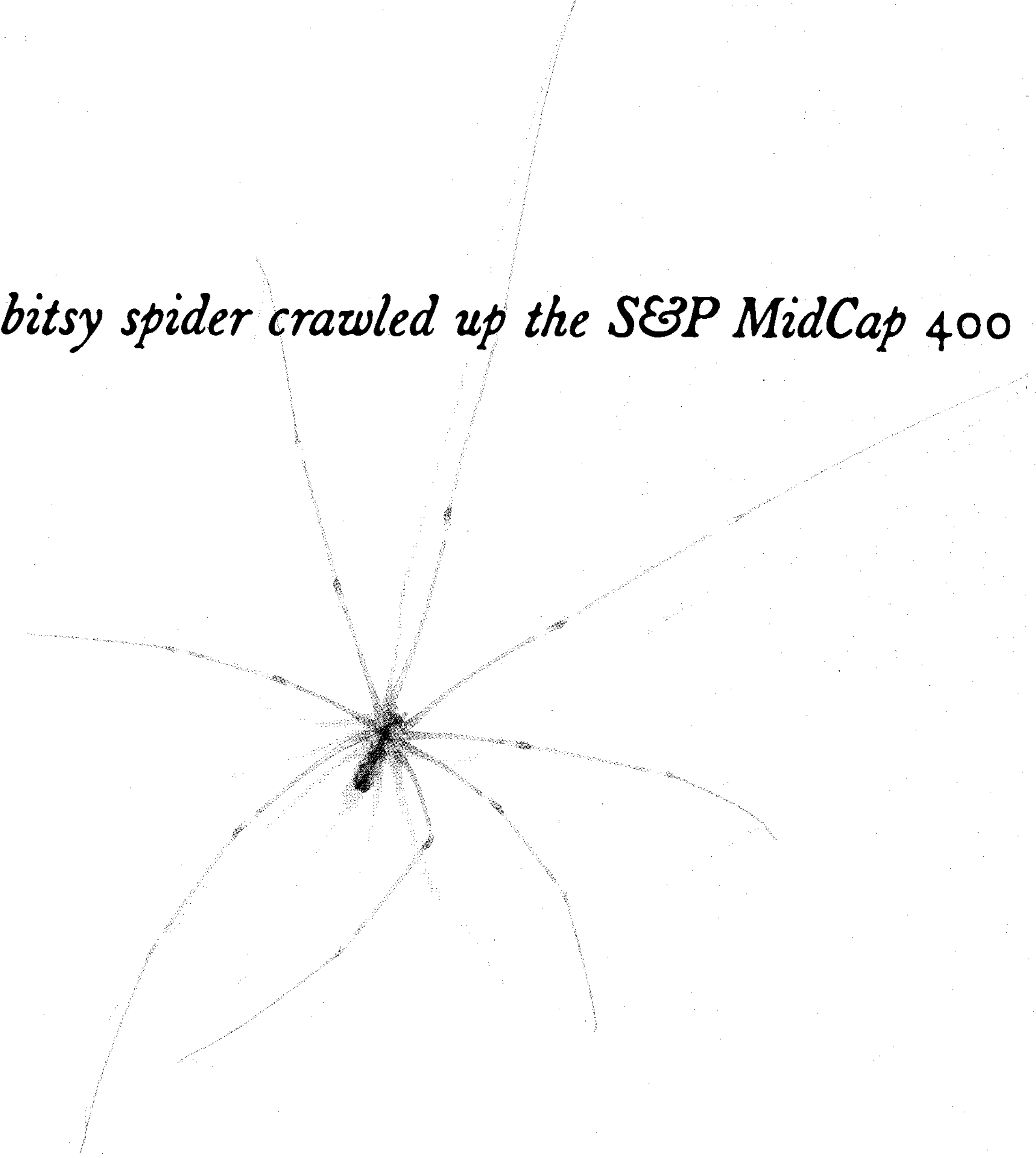

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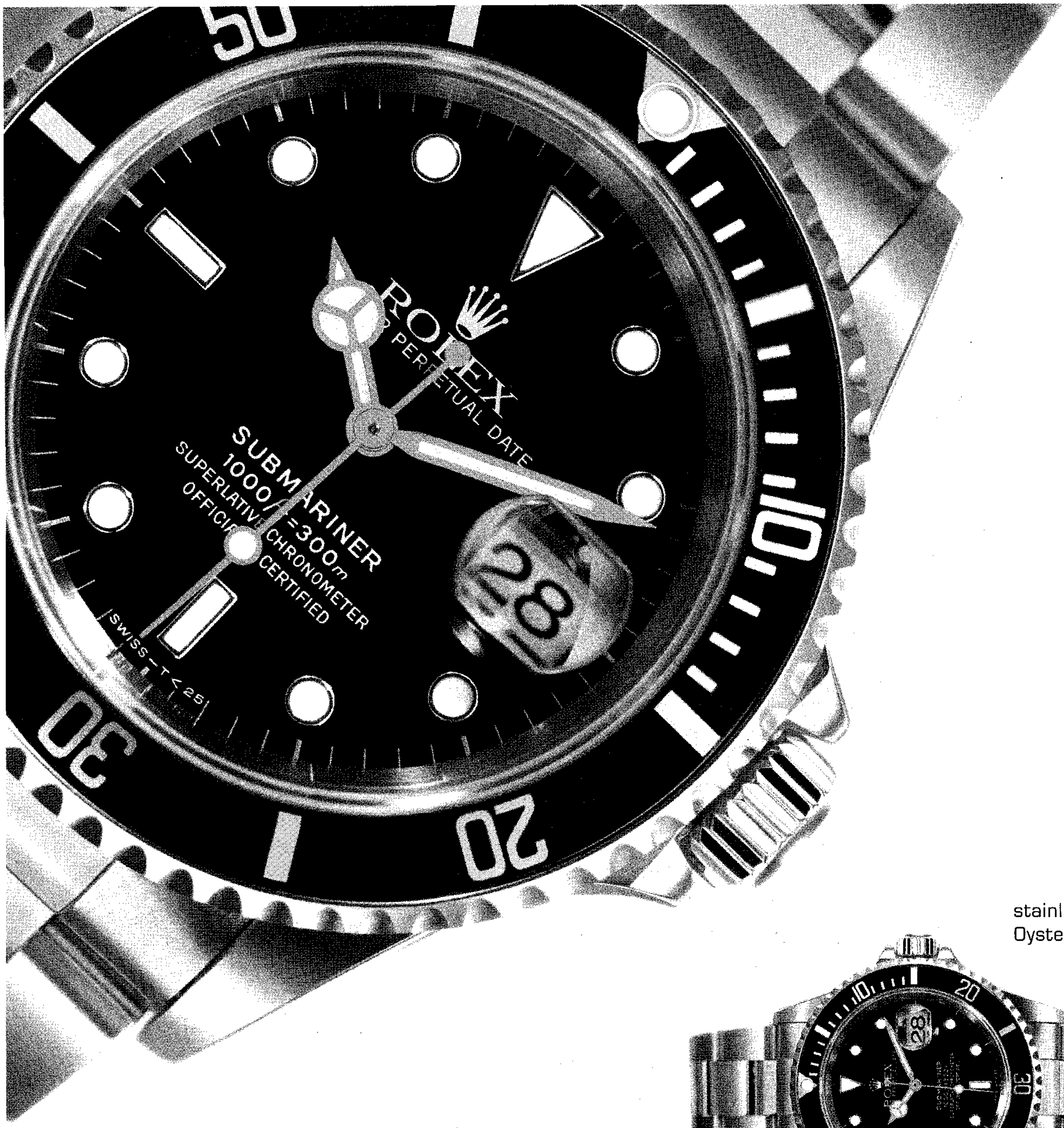
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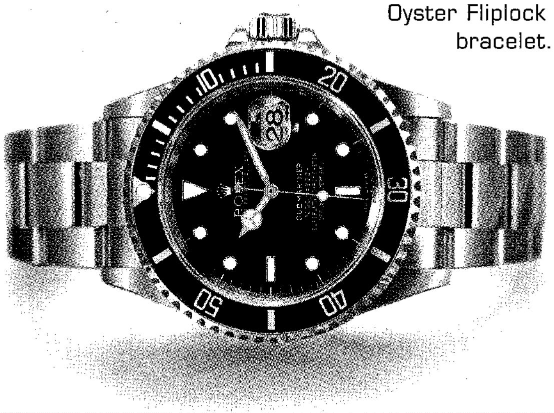

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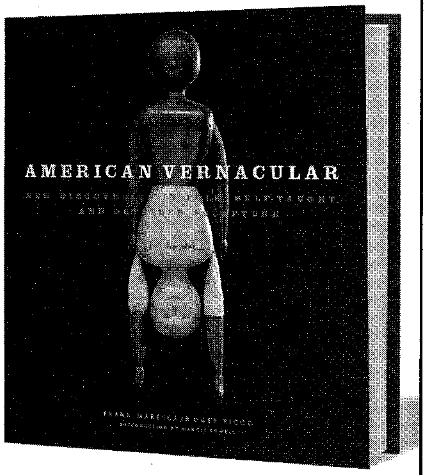

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CONTRIBUTORS

Lawrence Wright ("The Man Behind bin Laden," p. 56), a staff writer, is working on a book about the events of September 11th.

Marian Fontana (The Talk of the Town, p. 33) will publish a memoir, "A Widow's Walk," next year.

Nicholas Lemann ("The War on What?," p. 36) is the magazine's Washington correspondent.

Cathleen Schine ("The 'Holy Ground,' " p. 46) has published five novels, including "The Love Letter" and "Rameau's Niece."

Galway Kinnell (Poem, p. 52) is the author of thirteen collections of poetry, including "A New Selected Poems."

Ellen S. Bakalian (The Talk of the Town, p. 34) is a writer in New York.

Julian Barnes (Fiction, p. 92) has a collection of essays about France, "Something to Declare," coming out next month.

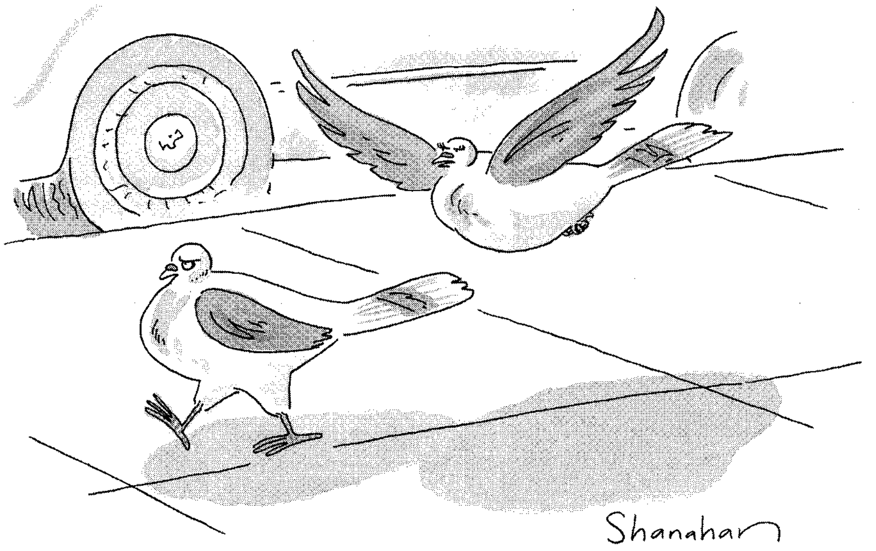
Lyzbeth Glick (The Talk of the Town, p. 35) is working on a book about fathers and daughters.

Louis Menand (A Critic at Large, p. 98) is the author of "The Metaphysical Club," which won this year's Pulitzer Prize for History.

Dana Goodyear (Poem, p. 82) is a member of the magazine's editorial staff.

Gilles Peress (Portfolio, p. 86) is an editor of "Here Is New York: A Democracy of Photographs," which came out this month.

Charles Simic (Poem, p. 108) is the author of the collection "The Voice at 3 A.M.," to be published in the spring. ♦



"Walking may burn more calories, but you're three times as likely to nosh."

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THE MAIL

OLD-FASHIONED WEDDINGS

Rebecca Mead calls gay-wedding announcements the "supreme expression of the contemporary ideal of marriage as a grand, individualistic romance detached from society's strictures" (The Talk of the Town, September 2nd). For many gay couples, however, the pursuit of marriage or its legal equivalent is about old-fashioned pragmatism, responsibility, and security. My partner and I will celebrate ten years together this October. We've done fine on our own in the romance department, but we don't have the legal rights and obligations that come with marriage: inheritance rights and survivor benefits, hospital visitation, and so on. The fight for gay marriage isn't frivolous or self-centered but a recognition that the marriage contract is a crucial tool for couples intent on supporting each other (and their children). In fact, we're striving for exactly the kind of marriage whose passing Mead laments—albeit with a twist.

C. Lindon Larson
Iowa City, Iowa

ALICE AND JULIA

Though it took seven years after the publication of Alice B. Toklas's cookbook, in 1954, for Julia Child's "Mastering the Art of French Cooking" to appear, as Janet Malcolm notes in her tribute to Toklas, the two chefs met in 1949 (First Tastes, August 19th & 26th). It was at the wedding of Ernest Hemingway's son Jack, in Paris. Alice and Gertrude Stein had become Jack's godmothers (when the Hemingway-Stein friendship was still in bloom), and on this day Julia was the matron of honor. Neither of them, however, helped with the cooking.

Hans Gallas
San Francisco, Calif.

BONES AND ALL

The shad's stubborn boniness may, as John McPhee writes, have deterred many diners, but it is not unbeatable ("Sapidissima," August 19th & 26th). My father, a thoracic surgeon, had two passions: fishing and cooking. One day, a friend gave him two shad. He tried to fillet the fish, but immediately encountered the unfamiliar bony structure and had to stop. He telephoned restaurants and fish shops, but no one could explain it to him. Not to be undone, he wrapped the fish up and took them to a local hospital where he was well known. He walked into Radiology, told the X-ray technician what he wanted, and soon returned home with fish and films. Placing the X-rays in the kitchen window, he proceeded to fillet the fish with little trouble. He then threw the films away and said, "Now I know how to bone a shad."

Anne Ashburn Cianni
Stamford, Conn.

A GERMAN JEW

Cynthia Ozick, in her essay on Gershom Scholem, emphasizes his estrangement from Germany, even before the Second World War (A Critic at Large, September 2nd). In Jerusalem, Scholem may have written "in a Hebrew that rivalled his native German in literary quality." But in the volumes in his personal library, now at the Hebrew University, one cannot help noticing the many marginal comments ("*Quatsch!*," or "Nonsense!," among his favorites), all in German. Scholem's scholarly methods and much of his most personal writing remained German. Given his deep skepticism toward the reëstablishment of German-Jewish culture after the war, this may be hard to credit. But, like his friend Walter Benjamin, Scholem continued to rely on his German intellectual training long after he was physically removed from that world.

Noah Isenberg
Associate Professor of German Studies
Wesleyan University
Middletown, Conn.

•

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Not
without
hope
we suffer
and we
mourn.

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Wordsworth

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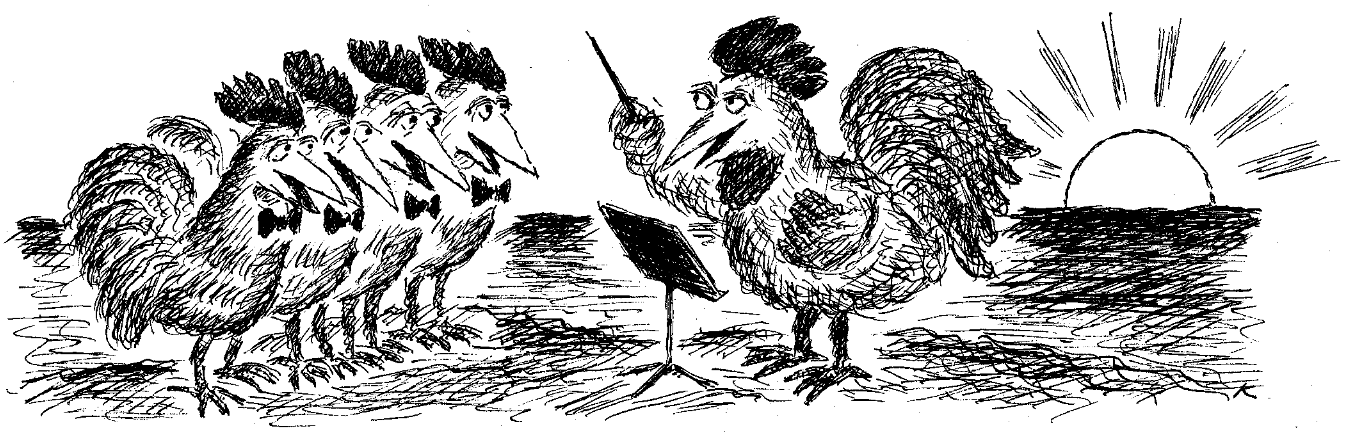
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



THE THEATRE
OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

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BRAVE NEW WORLD
A marathon of fifty new plays and songs—written and performed by artists including Sarah Jessica Parker, Matthew Broderick, Harvey Keitel, Peter Gallagher, Jerry Herman, Jules Feiffer, Arthur Laurents, Mercedes Ruehl, Lynn Ahrens, and Stephen Flaherty—commemorating the anniversary of September 11, 2001. Sept. 9-11. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

BURN THIS
Catherine Keener and Edward Norton lead the cast in a Signature Theatre Company revival of Lanford Wilson's 1987 drama. In previews. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

CALL THE CHILDREN HOME
A musical set in a brothel in New Orleans at the beginning of the twentieth century, written by the late Thomas Babe (book) and Mildred Kayden (music and lyrics). Previews begin Sept. 12. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

HAPPY DAYS
Joseph Chaikin directs Beckett's play at the theatre in which it premièred, in New York in 1961. With Joyce Aaron as Winnie and Ron Faber as Willie. Previews begin Sept. 17. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.)

JOLSON AND COMPANY
A musical about the life of the early show-biz superstar, written by Stephen Mo Hanan (who portrays Jolson) and Jay Berkow. Previews begin Sept. 12. (Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

JULIUS CAESAR
The experimental Access Theatre Company's staging of Shakespeare's play, adapted and directed by Randy Sharp. Previews begin Sept. 12. (One Sheridan Sq. 807-9300.)

LITTLE HAM
An encore staging of a musical based on the Langston Hughes play of the same name, which was staged last fall by the Amas Musical Theatre. It has music by Judd Woldin, lyrics by Richard Engquist and Mr. Woldin, and a book by Dan Owens. Previews begin Sept. 12. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

A MAN OF NO IMPORTANCE
Roger Rees and Faith Prince star in a musical by Terrence McNally (book), Stephen Flaherty (music), and Lynn Ahrens (lyrics), based on the 1994 movie, set in Dublin in the sixties, about a middle-aged, closeted bus driver who gets into trouble when he proposes Wilde's "Salomé" as his church troupe's next theatrical production. Joe Mantello is the director. Previews begin Sept. 12. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

THE MAYOR'S LIMO
A comedy by Mark Nassar ("Tony n' Tina's Wedding"), about a homeless man who becomes the center of a political war after he unwittingly urinates on the mayor's car during a demonstration. Previews begin Sept. 17. (Kraine, 85 E. 4th St. 352-3101.)

MY OLD LADY
Israel Horovitz's latest play stars Peter Friedman as a man who inherits a Paris apartment, only to find that it has a ninety-year-old woman (Siân Phillips) and her daughter (Jan Maxwell) living in it. David Esbjornson is the director. Previews begin Sept. 12. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

THE PARADISE PROJECT
The performance artist John Kelly's meditation on the 1945 French film "Children of Paradise," with music by Michael Torke and Mark Campbell. Previews Sept. 12-13. Opens Sept. 14 at 8 and continues through Sept. 28. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793.)

ROMAN NIGHTS
The long friendship between Tennessee Williams and Anna Magnani is the subject of a new play by Franco D'Alessandro. In previews. (DR2, 103 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

SAY GOODNIGHT, GRACIE
Frank Gorshin portrays George Burns, in a one-man show about the comic's life, written by Rupert Holmes. John Tillinger is the director. Previews begin Sept. 17. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER
A Pearl Theatre Company production of Oliver Goldsmith's 1773 comedy. Previews begin Sept. 17. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

SPLIT
Michael Weller's comic drama about the breakup of a "perfect" couple. Previews Sept. 12-15. Opens Sept. 16 at 8. (Lion, 410 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

THE WORLD OVER
Playwrights Horizons kicks off the season with a new play by Keith Bunin, about a young man who believes he is the lost prince of a mythical kingdom. In previews. (The Duke, 229 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
This Roundabout Theatre revival of the 1938 Rodgers and Hart comedy based on Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors" has a new book by Nicky Silver, based on George Abbot's original script—and something has been lost in translation. Rather than perked up, the show feels freighted by the update. Scott Ellis's direction and Martin Pakledinaz's costumes have Looney Tunes written all over them. The resulting hybrid of humor brings to mind the broad, silly, knowing farce that Carol Burnett's company patented in the seventies, which hasn't aged well, either. Rodgers and Hart's songs are timeless, and the game cast renders them well, but that's still not a good enough reason to sit through everything else. (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 719-1300.)

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS
In the Aquila Theatre Company's excellent production of Shakespeare's intricately foolish story, the laughs are many and the delights deep. The seven cast members, led here by Mark Saturno and Louis Butelli as the two sets of twins, mix remarkable range with insane energy. (Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

ENDPAPERS
The first full-length play by Thomas McCormack, the retired C.E.O. of an independently owned publishing house (St. Martin's), about choosing a successor as C.E.O. of an independently owned publishing house, is highly literate (imagine: grammar jokes!) and full of zingy one-liners. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE
The brilliant Edie Falco's star turn in Terence McNally's sentimental two-character study about a man and a woman marginalized by life while struggling to embrace it is the best reason to see this derivative work, which owes a great deal to William Inge. She's an over-forty waitress who once dreamed of being an actress; Johnny (Stanley Tucci) is the hyperkinetic cook at the restaurant where Frankie works. He wants children, she's afraid of commitment. Unfortunately, McNally exploits Inge's weakest traits as a writer—corny exposition, faulty psychological reasoning—and turns the volume up high on them. The play is a surface crowd-pleaser, and Tucci's strident surface charm works perfectly with it, but Falco's steady reasonableness, even in Frankie's moments of panic, shows up both Tucci and the play. With this performance, she joins the ranks of Laurette Taylor and Shirley Booth: great American actresses

Visions of Hope

September 11 opened our eyes. We saw things we would have preferred not to see, and things we never wanted to see.
Now, one year later, we can close our eyes and imagine the future, knowing that something still remains, indelible, before our eyes.

Fabrica presents the Visions of Hope exhibition at the Italian Cultural Institute, 686 Park Avenue, New York. September 9 to 21, 2002.

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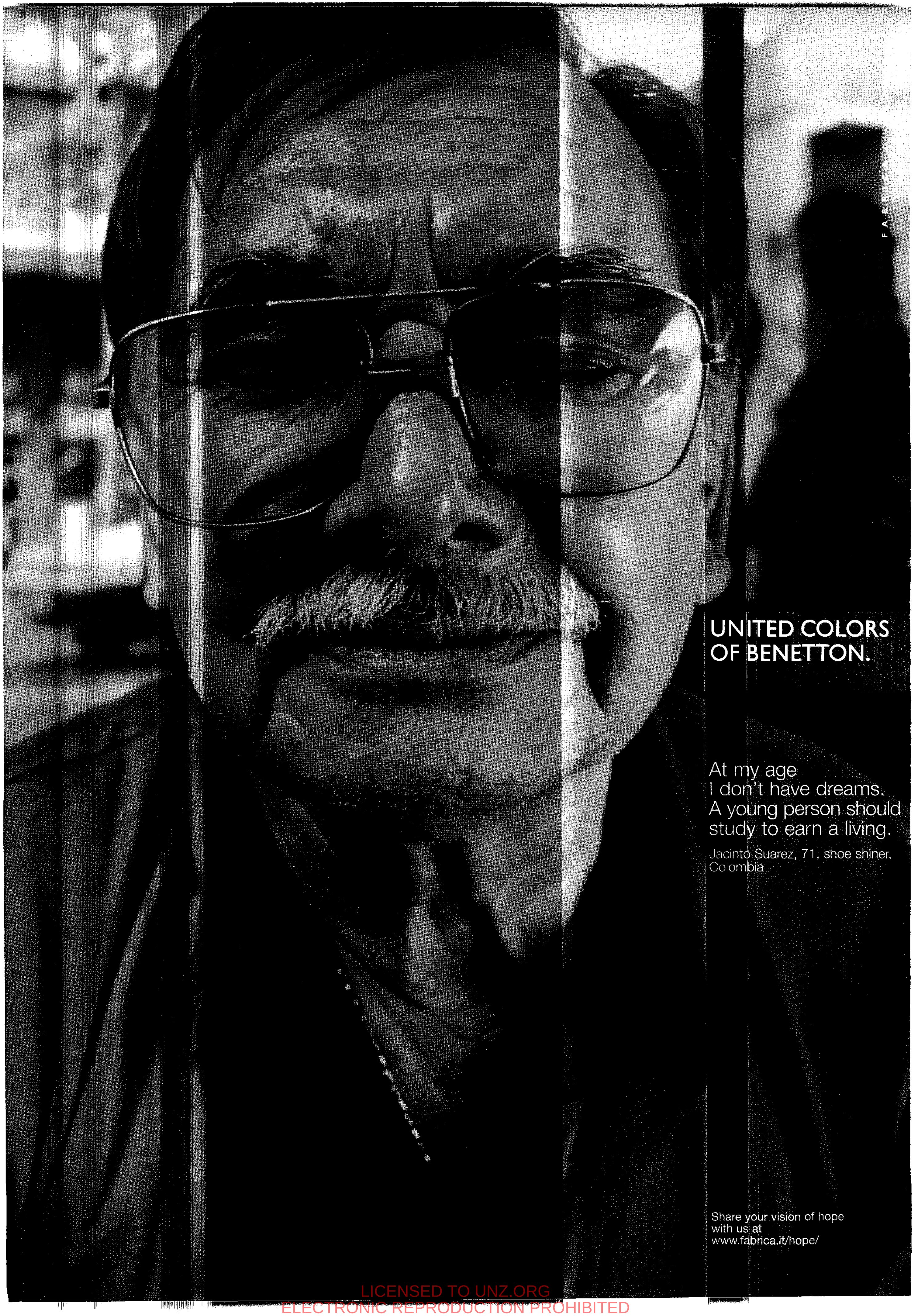

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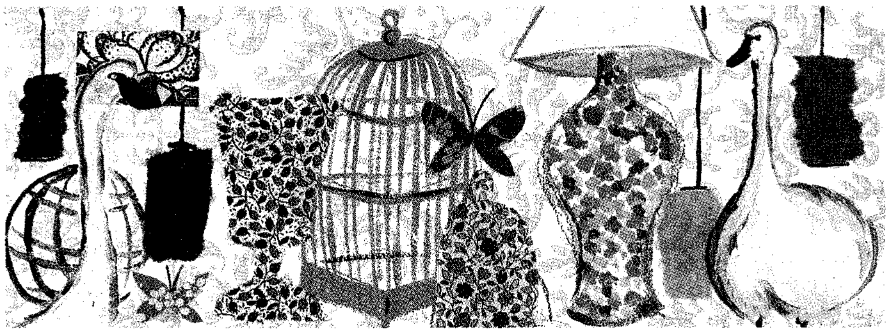
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

Bowery Boys



ELIZA GRAN

Though the rough charm of the Bowery has been somewhat diluted by the addition of an N.Y.U. dorm, John Derian is still a booster. "I've been here seven years," he says of his shop, **JOHN DERIAN** (6 E. 2nd St.; 677-3917), a space once occupied by what he swears was a "shroud-making factory." Recently, Derian, a découpage artist with a shock of dirty-blond hair, piled a two-hundred-year-old French country farm table with a collection of Chinese mirrors, a huge industrial basket made of wire, a bunch of clear-glass fishermen's buoys, and a taxidermied crane deaccessioned from the Brooklyn Museum. In addition to the quirky collectibles, the store specializes in glass accessories—cachepots, platters, paperweights—that Derian has découpaged with surprisingly elegant results ($30 to $400). Everything from nineteenth-century botanical prints to vintage street maps is pressed into service, and there's even a blown-glass tray featuring an invitation to a watermelon-and-bingo party on August 8, 1895, that is illustrated with drawings of a melon slice and a loving sketch of Bingo the dog.

"Until fairly recently, the Bowery always possessed the greatest number of groggeries, flophouses, clip joints, brothels, fire sales, rigged auctions, pawnbrokers, dime museums, shooting galleries, dime-a-dance establishments, fortune-telling salons, lottery agencies, thieves' markets, and tattoo parlors," Luc Sante wrote in "Low Life," his history of old New York. Of these vanished dives, we can report at least one descendant, though it's nothing like its forbears. **334 BOWERY TATTOO** (334 Bowery; 253-7899) is as pristine as an Upper East Side beauty salon; it's even painted Prada green. On a recent visit, the hushed atmosphere was broken only by the steady buzzing of a tattoo needle. Out front, books of flash art are displayed in a fashion to rival Rizzoli; a case of bone and horn jewelry meant, according to the proprietress, to accommodate "stretched piercings," glittered like a Cartier vitrine.

"Nothing in here is important the way other people would have you think," says James Elkind, the owner of **LOST CITY ARTS** (18 Cooper Square; 375-0500). "Other dealers overintellectualize mid-century furniture. For me, it's about your gut reaction." Two years ago, Elkind packed up his Lafayette Street store and moved. "We don't see the movie stars like we used to, but when I moved to Lafayette fourteen years ago there was no one there, either." If there's one thing that unites Elkind's stock, it's that all the merchandise has what he calls graphic punch, from mobiles "for people who can't afford a Calder" to a leather-and-stainless-steel daybed ($11,000) designed in the late fifties by Poul Kjaerholm.

"This area is totally up and coming!" beams the guy behind the counter at **RAFĒ** (1 Bleecker St.; 800-486-9544), a slick accessories shop that's been around for about eighteen months. Rafē thinks of everything: a pebble-grain leather briefcase has an exterior slot to accommodate a newspaper ($635); a nubuck newsboy cap ($125) offers a back pocket just big enough for "Hairspray" tickets. Crocheted belts may not have any hidden recesses, but they do sport a host of mulberry-colored resin beads and enough long fringe to get the ticket price waived at a Woodstock reunion.

—*Lynn Yaeger*

who garner audience sympathy through lyrical naturalism. Joe Mantello is the director. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

THE GRADUATE
This pointless production, starring Kathleen Turner as Mrs. Robinson, is endless and full of dead air. There are exactly two pleasures here: Victor Slezak, as Mr. Robinson, and Murphy Guyer, as Benjamin's father; they depict beautifully the anger and anxiety that underlie their postwar poolside bonhomie. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/15/02.) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GUYS
A dialogue between a fire captain who lost eight of his men on September 11th and an editor who helps him prepare their eulogies, written by Anne Nelson, a journalist, and directed by Jim Simpson, the Flea Theatre's artistic director. It's an artful and moving re-creation of the relationships New Yorkers formed as a result of that day—of the way that people "jumped tracks" and suddenly saw into each other's lives—and an admirable tribute to the men who died. (The Flea, 41 White St. 206-1515.) (Note: On Sept. 11, Sigourney Weaver will reprise her original role, in a free performance at Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theatre; for more information, call 362-7600.)

HAIRSPRAY
This musical-comedy version of the 1988 John Waters movie, with a book by Mark O'Donnell and Thomas Meehan, a score by Marc Shaiman, and lyrics by Shaiman and Scott Wittman, takes off from the opening number and never loses its momentum. In Baltimore in 1962, the rotund teen Tracy Turnblad (Marissa Jaret Winokur) wants to dance, make out with the best-looking boy in town, and integrate "The Corny Collins Show," a local teen-dance TV program. David Rockwell's sets and William Ivey Long's costumes combine and highlight the period artifacts in an ecstasy of gorgeous bad taste, offered with just enough invention to achieve lyrical wit. What the show is parodying was trivial to begin with, so the parodies don't sting—they're not meant to. Instead they break free into some goofy new realm of pop Dada. With the great Harvey Fierstein, plucked, shaved, and padded, as Tracy's mother, Edna Turnblad, a housewife who takes in laundry but who gets to appear, at the climax of the show, in flaming pink. Jack O'Brien is the director. (9/2/02) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

HARLEM SONG
Essentially a revue, using both old and new compositions, selected or written by the director George C. Wolfe and the show's talented music supervisors, Zane Mark and Daryl Waters. It has no dialogue to speak of—or, at least, no dialogue that contributes significantly to the plot or helps to convey the time line framing the show's eleven sections, each of which marks a particular moment in the neighborhood's social history ("The Harlem Renaissance," "La Imigración," "The Depression," and so on). Like Alice Walker's "The Color Purple" and the novels of Terry McMillan, it is a form of art whose aesthetic concerns are secondary to its desire to make "the people" feel good, about themselves and their community. The Harlem of "Harlem Song" is not an urban wasteland in the process of reinventing itself. It is a realm of legend and lore, and a mythical homeland, which it is our duty as theatregoers, as citizens, to celebrate. This is a point worth making, but not one that bears much repeating. And since there is little factual detail to support this portrayal, "Harlem Song" degenerates rather swiftly into propaganda. We see the neighborhood's fabulous past, and we hope for its fabulous future, all without quite knowing how Harlem became Harlem in the first place. (8/19 & 26/02) (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 307-7171.)

INTO THE WOODS
Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's 1987 fairy-tale-derived musical isn't so much a rethinking of fairy tales as it is a parable about growing up and finding your place in the community, and about learning to live with uncertainty and ambivalence. The archetypal material is treated with

suitable directness and simplicity, and yet the show lacks none of the intelligence or emotional honesty we expect from Sondheim. Mr. Lapine is the director. (5/13/02) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

JOE
In Richard Maxwell's new play, six actors portray the title character at different stages in his life. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

JOHN MORAN W/EVA MÜLLER
The techno-opera composer and the German dancer and choreographer team up to perform excerpts from Moran's earlier works, which have included "Jack Benny!," "Everyday Newt Burman," and "Mathew in the School of Life." Sept. 15 at 7:30. (Galapagos Art Space, 70 N. 6th St., between Kent and Wythe Sts., Brooklyn. 718-384-4586.)

OKLAHOMA!
There are stupendous pleasures in the Royal National Theatre's version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 American classic. Many of them are due to the high-spirited, humorous choreography of Susan Stroman, and to Anthony Ward's picturesque set. But technique, which can make a show work, is not enough to make it wonderful. (4/1/02) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER
Mark Twain's novel has been adapted for the stage and musicalized by Neil Berg (score and lyrics) and Bernie Garza and Ray Roderick (book). (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

RICKY JAY: ON THE STEM
The master magician's tribute to the flimflammery and weird entertainments that have cropped up over the years along the length of Broadway, "the stem that winds the watch" of New York City. Prepare to be happily hornswoggled. Directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 246-4422.)

TAKE ME OUT
From London's Donmar Warehouse, a new play by Richard Greenberg, in which a heroic baseball player comes out to the press. Joe Mantello is the director. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200.)

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE
Just like the 1967 movie it's based on, this musical is supposed to be all madcap Jazz Age fizziness, but the harder the cast sings and dances, the flatter the enterprise falls. The colors seem garish rather than gay, the manic energy feels forced at gunpoint, and the only thing you recall about Sutton Foster's Millie after you leave the theatre is her huge white teeth and bouncy black bob. Call it thoroughly boring, shrilly. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

THREE-CORNERED MOON
A Keen Company revival of Gertrude Tonkonogy's 1933 comedy, about a crazy Brooklyn family dealing with life during the Depression. (Blue Heron Arts Center, 123 E. 24th St. 560-7284. Closes Sept. 29.)

LONG RUNS

AIDA
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4747.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4747.

BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES
Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.

CABARET
Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 239-6200.

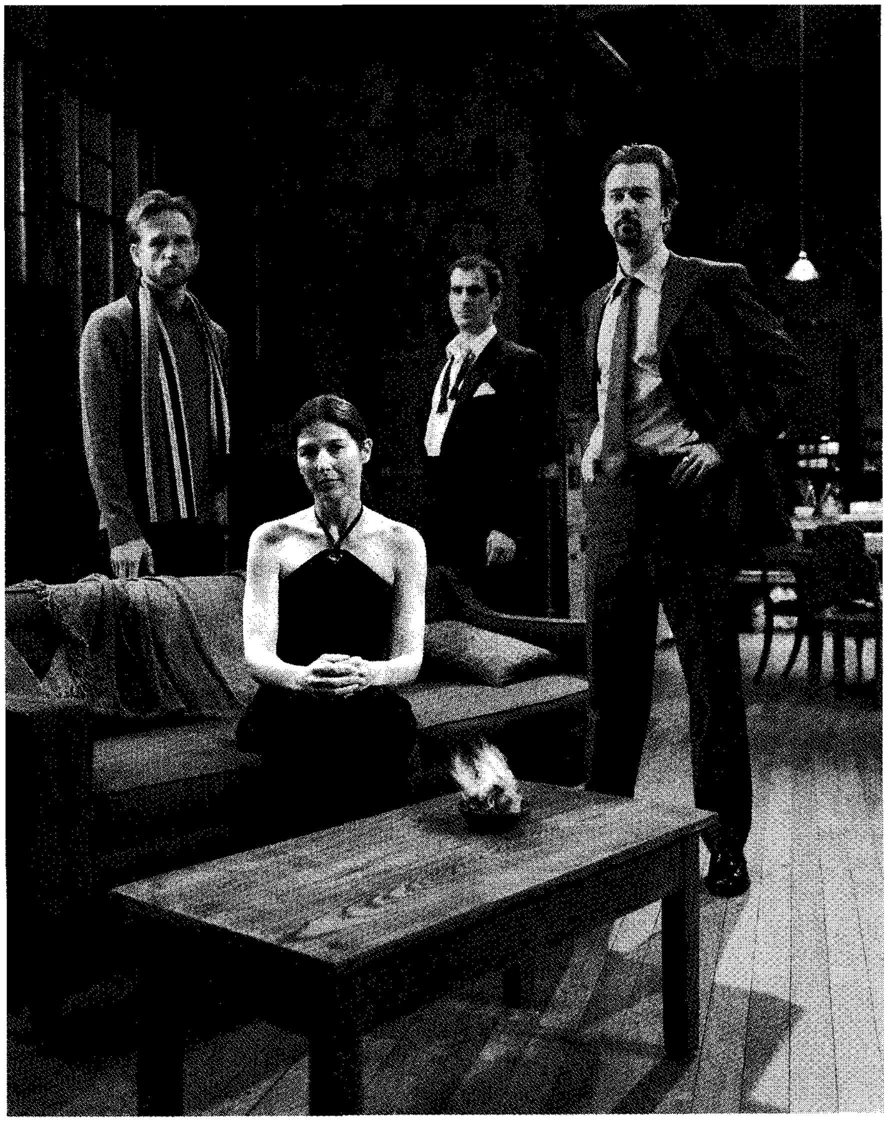
CHICAGO
Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED)
Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.

DE LA GUARDA
Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200.

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY: 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.

42ND STREET
Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.



Dallas Roberts, Catherine Keener, Ty Burrell, and Edward Norton, in "Burn This."

JASON SCHMIDT

THE GOAT; OR, WHO IS SYLVIA
Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.

I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

THE LION KING
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.

LOVE, JANIS
Village Theatre, 158 Bleecker St. 307-4100.

LES MISÉRABLES
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.

MAMMA MIA!
Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 563-5544.

METAMORPHOSES
Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.

PERFECT CRIME
Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

THE PRODUCERS
St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

PROOF
Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.

PUPPETRY OF THE PENIS
John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.

RENT
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000.

STOMP
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.

THE TALE OF THE ALLERGIST'S WIFE
Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. (Closes Sept. 15.)

TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING
St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200.

UNDERNEATH THE LINTEL
Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 239-6200.

URINETOWN
Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

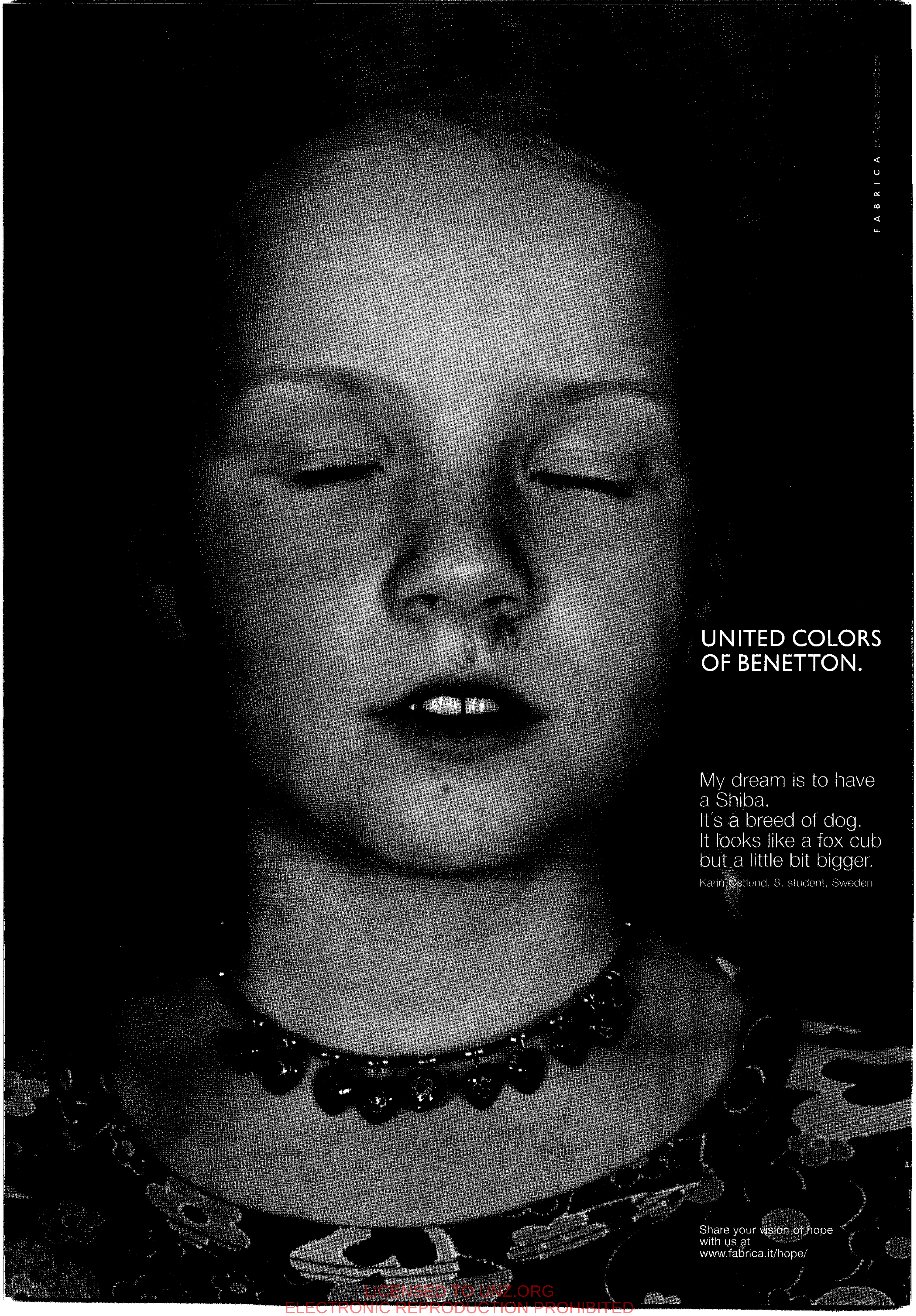
THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

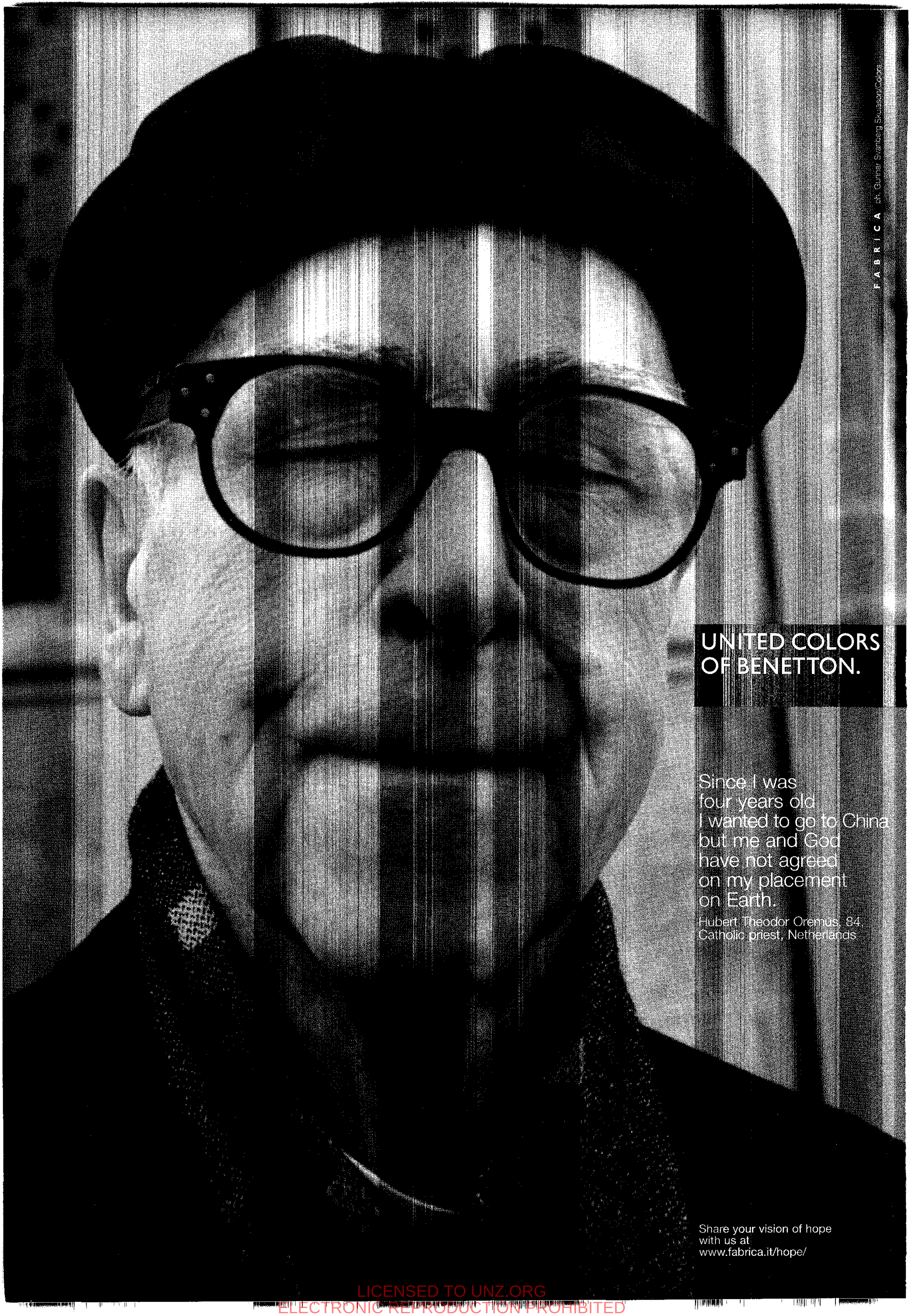
DANCE

DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM
The company performs "Stabat Mater," a memorial ballet choreographed by Michael Smuin. (Evening Stars Music and Dance Series, Battery Park, State St. at Battery Pl. Sept. 14 at 4. No tickets necessary.)

MISNOMER DANCE THEATRE
The choreographer Chris Elam presents a series of collaborative performances inspired by Balinese dance but grounded in theatrical transformations: arms sprout from heads, a dancer metamorphoses into an ostrich, five dancers appear to share a single head. This week, Elam is joined by Yoshiko Chuma. (Chashama, 135 W. 42nd St. 206-1515. Sept. 16 at 8. Through Sept. 29.)

"TWO HOURS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD"
Cortez & Co. Contemporary Ballet offers its reflections on September 11th, on a program that includes "The Man and the Echo" and "Cheating, Lying, Stealing," set to work by the Bang on a Can All-Stars. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 799-8682. Sept. 12-15 at 8:30.)


FABRICA by [illegible]
UNITED COLORS
OF BENETTON.
My dream is to have
a Shiba.
It's a breed of dog.
It looks like a fox cub
but a little bit bigger.
Karin Östlund, 8, student, Sweden
Share your vision of hope
with us at
www.fabrica.it/hope/


FABRICA ph. Gunnar Svanberg Skulason/Colors
UNITED COLORS OF BENETTON.
Since I was
four years old
I wanted to go to China
but me and God
have not agreed
on my placement
on Earth.
Hubert Theodor Oremus, 84,
Catholic priest, Netherlands
Share your vision of hope
with us at
www.fabrica.it/hope/

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

WORLD MUSIC INSTITUTE
Sept. 12 at 8: **J. D. Parran,** a saxophonist who has worked with the jazz musicians Hamiet Bluiett, Lena Horne, and Julius Hemphill, joins the classically trained bassist **Mark Deutsch** (who will play the sitar and its relatives here) for the opening concert of "Interpretations," the Institute's contemporary-music series. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St.) ♦ Sept. 14 at 8: The Nigerian native Yacouba Moumouni, a master of the whispery Fulani reed flute known as the *seyse,* leads his eight-piece band, **Mamar Kassey,** in its New York City début. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St.) (For more information about both concerts, call 545-7536.)

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE
The live hip-hop band the **Roots,** along with the rapper **Common,** join **De La Soul** and others in concert to benefit this mostly free summer music festival. The show also celebrates the twentieth anniversary of the downtown world-music venue S.O.B.'s. (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. 360-2777. Sept. 14 at 3.)

VERIZON MUSIC FESTIVAL
The pianist McCoy Tyner, joining forces with the Alvin Ailey II dance company, starts this weeklong gathering of big-name jazz musicians. (Alice Tully Hall. For more information, call 501-1390. Sept. 17 at 8. The festival runs through Sept. 22.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

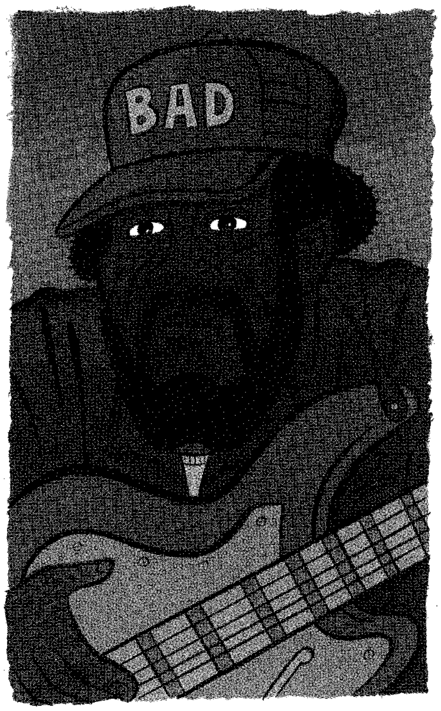
B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (997-4144)—Sept. 12: **Quiet Riot,** once the first name in pop-metal royalty, set the standard for eighties hair bands with their 1983 signature cover of Slade's "Cum On Feel the Noize." Their time at the top was brief, as the hits dried up and the lead singer Kevin DuBrow's ego swelled to unwieldy proportions, prompting his dismissal. Time heals all wounds, however, and today a humbled Quiet Riot is back in the trenches. Sept. 14: **George Clinton and the P-Funk All Stars.**

BLARNEY STAR
43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Sept. 13: The New York City native and former All-Ireland fiddle champion **Brian Conway** drops by to celebrate the release of his new album of County Sligo-style fiddling, "First Through the Gate."

BOTTOM LINE
15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Sept. 13: **Tuck & Patti.** He plays guitar—lots of it—and she sings; together the deceptively minimal husband-and-wife team of Tuck Andress and Patti Cathcart have built a core fan base that swears by their well-turned treatments of standards, pop tunes, and original numbers.

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—Sept. 13: While parodying the inherent ridiculousness of heavy metal is hardly groundbreaking eighteen years after the advent of Spinal Tap, New Jersey's excellently named **Satanicide** amplify every possible cliché of the genre to maximum comic effect. Sept. 14: **Strangefolk,** the other neo-hippie band out of Burlington, Vermont, whose jam-based shows are often compared to those of Phish. Sept. 15: Stephin Merritt, LD Beghtol, and Dudley Klute can be found at various points on the Magnetic Fields' 1999 triple CD, "69 Love Songs." The trio, billing themselves as the **Three Terrors,** have performed together intermittently since then, most tellingly at a special Valentine's Day gig two years ago with a show of the world's saddest songs. This engagement promises to be a bit more festive. The set list here is a history of songs about drinking, drugs, and being intoxicated in general. They will be accompanied by ukulele, toy piano, musical saw, and other similarly whimsical instruments. Sept. 17: Initially criticized as being paltry Smiths imitators, the British gents in **Gene** stuck to their foppish guns as the rest of the world went nuts for Oasis and its shallow Beatles appropriation. Gene has since added elements of mod-esque muscle and Motown soul to its arsenal, concocting a stylishly versatile sound all its own.

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (539-8777)—Through Sept. 13: **Morelenbaum^2/Sakamoto.** The Japanese composer and pianist Ryuichi Sakamoto is known for his wild eclecticism. In a twenty-five-year career he has produced both embarrassing novelties and extravagant triumphs in genres ranging from "Krautrock" to classical music. In his latest project, he joins the cellist Jaques Morelenbaum and his wife, the singer Paula Morelenbaum, to explore the lesser-known works of the late bossa-nova innovator Antonio Carlos Jobim. The Morelenbaums are longtime veterans of Jobim's later bands, and the trio has an album of previously unrecorded Jobim songs, "Casa," which they cut in Jobim's Rio home, where Sakamoto played the Master's piano. Sept. 14: **Julee Cruise,** the onetime voice of "Twin Peaks." Sept. 15: The fifty-nine-year-old bluesman **Willie King** sings protest songs that are rooted in his own experience—when he's not leading his band, the Liberators, he's deep in the Alabama backcountry working with the Rural Members Association, a community-help group he founded twenty years ago, and organizing his annual Freedom Creek blues festival. Onstage, King's gravelly voice and sweet guitar work show that he's as passionate a performer as he is an activist.



Willie King, at Joe's Pub.

SETH

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Sept. 12: Formerly the drummer for the inventive indie-pop group New Radiant Storm King, Elizabeth Sharp has spent the past few years as the one-woman band **Ill Ease.** She recorded her latest album, "Live at the Holiday Sin," in a motel room on the Jersey shore, and it demonstrates the difficulties of leaving behind musical collaboration and conversation: though Sharp handles all the instruments with assurance, monotony creeps in like an unwanted midsummer cold front. Sept. 16: The singer-songwriter **James Angell** comes out of the Portland, Oregon, scene that gave birth some ten years ago to the Dandy Warhols (he was once in a band called Nero's Rome with the Dandy front man, Courtney Taylor). After dropping out of the music world to raise a daughter and build a house, Angell returns with an album of ambitious orchestral psychedelia, "Private Player," that's earned justifiable comparisons to the hallmark of the genre, Love's "Forever Changes."

PETE'S CANDY STORE
709 Lorimer St., Williamsburg (718-302-3770)—Sept. 14: The neo-folkie **Martha Wainwright.**

RODEO BAR
375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—Sept. 12: **BR5-49,** high-powered hepcat quintet from Nashville that mixes frenetic covers of rockabilly and country-and-Western classics with its own time-warping originals.

S.O.B.'S
204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Sept. 17: A diminutive Bostonian, **Mr. Lif** is the new favorite of underground hip-hop. It's easy to see why: his aggressively political rhymes are made palatable by a flow and sense of timing that is often missing from the grim world of indie hip-hop. Dining.

TONIC
107 Norfolk St. (358-7503)—Sept. 15: **James Angell** (see the Knitting Factory). With **Eszter Balint.**

VILLAGE UNDERGROUND
130 W. 3rd St. (777-7745)—Sept. 13: **Monte Montgomery,** an astonishing guitarist and songwriter from Austin, Texas. Sept. 17: **Red Rooster** delivers raw acoustic blues tunes that feel like they're straight from an impromptu jam circle at a backyard barbecue.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Sept. 13-14: **Patricia Barber** is one literate jazz lady. Original songs from her new album, "Verse," are littered with references to David Hockney, Baudelaire, and classical mythology. (One tune, "Dansons la Gigue," is an adaptation of a Paul Verlaine poem.) It's a good thing she also swings. Long a Chicago favorite, this pianist-singer-composer is quickly breaking through to the rest of a country obviously hungry for smart music. Dining.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Sept. 9-15: Defying the effects of time with delightful impunity, the extraordinary drummer **Elvin Jones** celebrates turning seventy-five with a two-week engagement with his Jazz Machine band. On opening night (his actual birthday), the perpetually dexterous and inventive percussionist is joined by **Wynton Marsalis;** let's hope the trumpeter can keep up with the grand old man. The saxophonist **Michael Brecker** lends a hand Sept. 10-11. Starting Sept. 17, the leader and company greet the saxophonist **Ravi Coltrane,** who will assist in a tribute to his father, and Jones's former employer, John Coltrane.

CARLYLE HOTEL
Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound murals, and, starting Sept. 10, the magnetic "42nd Street" veteran **Christine Ebersole,** whose repertoire ranges from Judy Garland to Joni Mitchell. ♦ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, the **Loston Harris** trio holds forth through Dec. 31.

JAZZ GALLERY
290 Hudson St., near Spring St. (242-1063)—Sept. 14: The young saxophonist **Marcus Strickland** has already paid his dues performing with such prestigious units as the Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall Jazz orchestras, as well as with such leaders as Roy Haynes and Lonnie Plaxico. He steps out on his own here with his quartet, which includes his identical twin brother, the drummer **E.J.**

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—Sept. 10-11: The trombonist **Wycliffe Gordon** and the pianist **Eric Reed** bonded when they played together under Wynton Marsalis, and now they can often be found on the same bandstand. A quartet setting will give both men plenty of room to strut their prodigious techniques and robust improvisational sensibilities. Sept. 12-15: **Eric Alexander** means business. This rough-and-ready tenor saxophonist draws on the Chicago horn tradition of his home

town, channelling the energy, authority, and tonal girth of players like Johnny Griffin and Gene Ammons without aping their styles. You don't go to hear Alexander expecting innovation or experimentation—basic hard bop is his strength. Dining.

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Sept. 15: The **Bill Charlap** trio is about as good as mainstream piano jazz gets these days. Working with the bassist **Peter Washington** and the drummer **Kenny Washington,** the thirtysomething Charlap displays the poise and taste, and increasingly, the inner depth, of such grand stylists as Hank Jones and the late Tommy Flanagan. His devotion to melody, both composed and improvised, is rare, precious, and beautiful. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

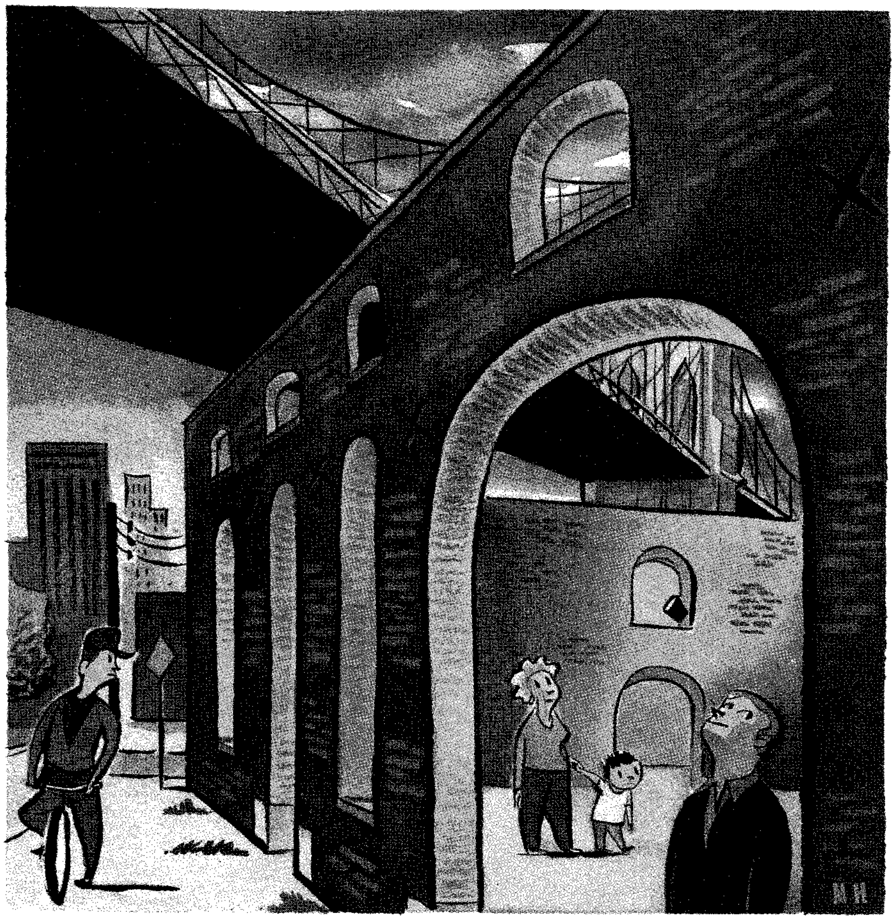
ART
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—**"Richard Avedon: Portraits"** presents the photographer's iconic images of the country's most influential figures, taken from the forties to the present, alongside portraits of humbler folk, such as cowboys and drifters. Through Jan. 5. ♦ **"Gauguin in New York Collections: The Lure of the Exotic"** crowds the downstairs of the Robert Lehman wing with a few familiar masterpieces—the Met's "Ia Orana Maria (Hail Mary)," the Albright-Knox's "Manao Tupapau (Spirit of the Dead Watching)"—and many lesser paintings, drawings, sculptures, prints, documents, and oddities (portrait ceramic vessels, a carved walking stick representing a serpent and a wooden shoe). Saluting the Empire State's ravenous hunger for Gauguin, the unchoosy mélange affords a pungent sense of the artist's uneven, seductive mojo. Through Oct. 20. ♦ A magnificent retrospective of the works of Thomas Eakins (1844-1916), perhaps the greatest American artist before Abstract Expressionism, endorses the opinion of the artist's older friend and hero Walt Whitman: "Eakins is not a painter, he is a force." Cannily intermingled paintings, photographs, drawings, sculptures, and miscellaneous artifacts—such as grisly casts taken from parts of dissected cadavers—reveal the artist as a yeoman genius, strenuous in all things. Eakins made aesthetics sweat. It is astonishing how contemporary he feels today. Through Sept. 15. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MOMA QNS)
33rd St. at Queens Blvd., Long Island City. (708-9480)—The museum's new home, until 2005, opens with a slew of shows perfect for its big warehouse of a space, including the ongoing **"To Be Looked At: Painting and Sculpture from the Collection,"** and **"AUTObodies: Speed, Sport, Transport,"** the museum's car collection. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, 10 to 5, and Friday evenings until 7:45.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—The museum's expansions have failed in some places (SoHo) and succeeded mightily in others (Bilbao). Perhaps in reaction to this, the newest item on the roster—an exhibition partnership with St. Petersburg's State Hermitage Museum and Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum—tries a different strategy: doing much with little. **"Connecting Museums"** is the first foray into shows that share collections, and it includes only three paintings: Velázquez's 1654 portrait "Infanta Margarita Teresa in a Pink Gown," from the Hermitage; "Portrait of Baertje Martens," from 1640, one of the Rembrandts in the Kunsthistorisches Museum collection; and the museum's own "Before the Mirror," by Manet, from 1876. Pampered princess, sturdy bourgeoise, and anonymous courtesan—the wildly varied visions of three masters are presented as a mini-history of European portraiture, from Velázquez's depiction of distant majesty to Rembrandt's psychologically acute contemplation of the middle class to Manet's secret glimpse of a demimondaine's back. Through Oct. 20. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—This mid-career retrospective of the work of Michal Rovner, an Israeli-born New York artist, opens with a mesmerizing black-and-white video; row upon row of moving figures cross paths silently in silhouette. (The image suggests an animated musical score with pedestrians in place of notes.) Rovner's work straddles photography, video, and digital art, riffing on minimalism with serial imagery of abstracted subjects. Through the artist's manipulations, bathers in the Dead Sea become ghostly bodies in suspended states, and flocks of birds transmogrify into foreboding constellations. There's a self-conscious gravitas to this stuff: despite arresting individual works, the over-all effect is aggravating. The work suffers from the kind of monotony that is often confused with momentousness. Through Oct. 13. ♦ Joan Mitchell, the long-underrated second-generation Abstract Expressionist who died in 1992 at her home near Monet's Giverny, spoke paint. A sumptuous retrospective confirms her as a major artist. Mitchell's varieties of abstract landscape conjure nature (including the difficult human kind, in ornery and exacerbated moods) out of pigmented stuff with authoritative abandon. Lessons from Pollock, de Kooning, and, yes, Monet are apparent but thoroughly subsumed. As with great Monets, you sometimes can't tell what you are looking at. It's paint, sure, but as a medium of metaphysical mystery. Through Sept. 29. ♦ **"Visions from America: Photographs from the Whitney Museum of American Art, 1940-2001."** Through Sept. 22. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)



"Consuming Places," a series of installations sponsored by Creative Time, includes Bill Fontana's sound installation in the roofless Tobacco Warehouse.

MARCELLUS HALL

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART
Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—**"Exposed: The Victorian Nude"** displays some one hundred and fifty classic examples of the British altogether, including Edwin Landseer's "Godiva," Frederic Leighton's "The Bath of Psyche," Lewis Carroll's photographs of nude children, and John William Waterhouse's image of the incongruously bare-chested teen-age martyr "Saint Eulalia." Through Jan. 5. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

BRONX MUSEUM OF THE ARTS
1040 Grand Concourse (718-681-6000)—The exhibit **"Artists in the Marketplace"** is only a part of the Artists in the Marketplace program, which has been introducing local artists to the art world (and helping them sell their work) since the eighties-era Bronx graffiti boom and bust. This year's class includes several cliques of varying charms, one into redecorating (Micki Watanabe lines bookbinder boxes with miniature shelves; Ulrike Heydenreich upholsters a wide silver ottoman with the topography of the moon), and another into happily doodling obscenities (the explicit drawings of Saul Chernik and Juan Gonzales are outdone only by a Nelson Santos mural of a man performing auto-fellatio, painted in a small room lit by a TV and a disco ball). Most Likely to Succeed goes to Rajkemal Kaur Kahlon's full-length portraits on plywood, with oval holes where her subjects' heads would be; viewers approach from behind, insert their faces, and see the piece for the first time, completed with their own visage, in the mirror. Through Oct. 20. (Open Wednesdays, 3 to 9; Thursdays and Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (849-8300)—The ambitious if scattershot **"Skin: Surface, Substance, and Design"** makes a case for skin-deep design, showcasing objects from the past five years which traffic in ideas about membrane and surface. Fashion and furniture are well represented (there's even a blue nylon windbreaker that doubles as an inflatable chair), but the curator, Ellen Lupton, casts a wide net, presenting contributions from disci-

UNITED COLORS
OF BENETTON.
A quiet life and that people be good and they don't throw trash in the street.
Zeus Saceda Arnáiz, 12, student and flower vendor, Spain
FABRICA
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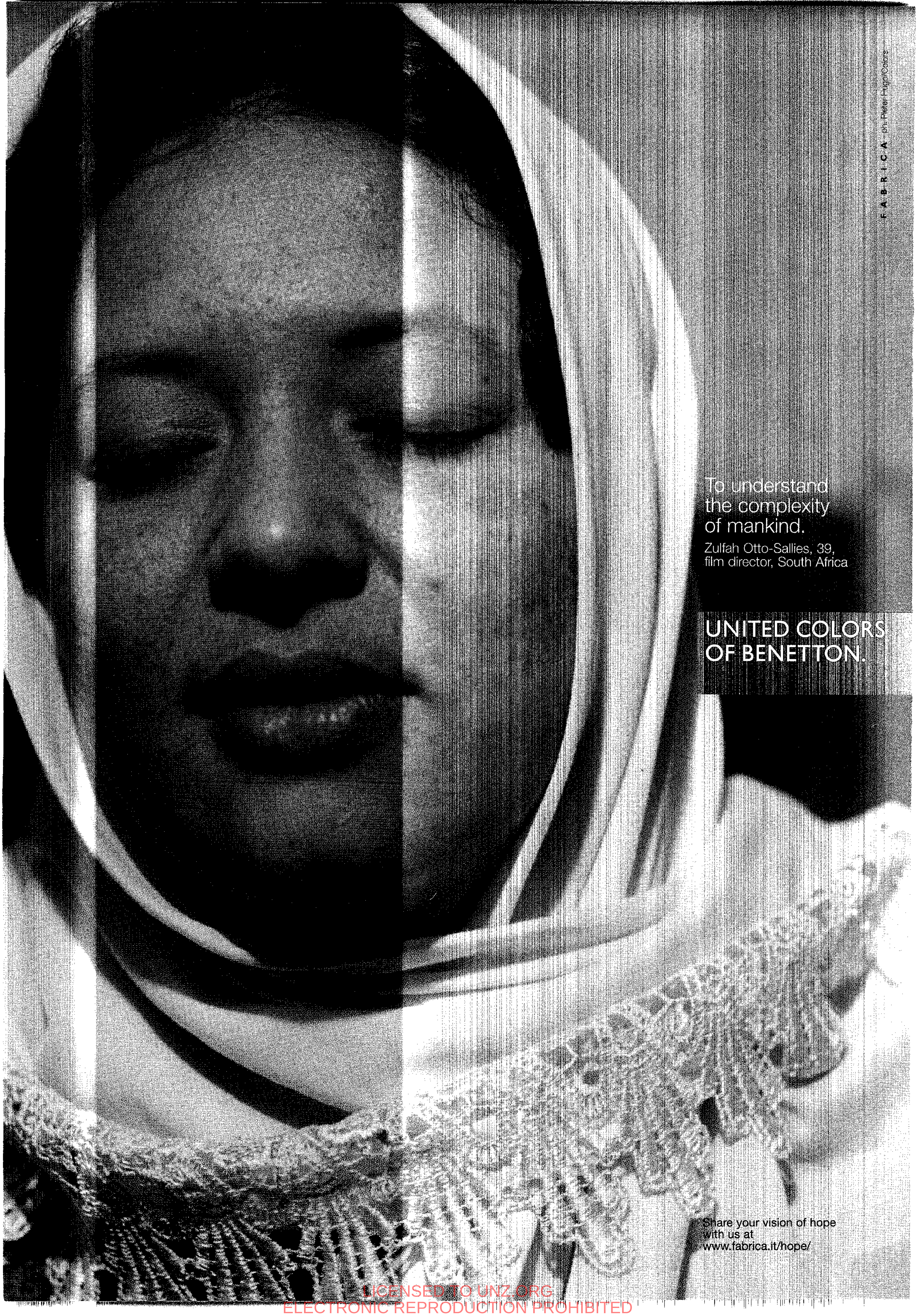
FABRICA ph. Pieter Hugo/Colors
To understand the complexity of mankind.
Zulfah Otto-Sallies, 39, film director, South Africa
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plines as diverse as biotechnology (a fascinating sampling of artificial skin and cartilage) and filmmaking (clips of movies from "Frankenstein" to "Aliens"). Sometimes this pluralism is stretched too thin, as with a visually tepid shelf of "cosmeceuticals," skin-care products packaged to resemble medical supplies. Through Sept. 15. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

P.S. 1 CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER
22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084)—The seven artists in **"Heart of Gold: Capitalism"** explore the relationship between commerce and aesthetics with mixed success. Chris Doyle gilds the gritty steps to the Williamsburg Bridge (three deadpan photos document the process); Peter Walsh offers "Hoard," an annotated bibliography of how society creates value (entries range from Mr. Peanut to P. T. Barnum, and free copies are available). A disproportionate amount of gallery space is devoted to "Climatex Lifecycle," a biodegradable commercial textile (artist Hope Ginsburg works in the company's marketing department). Worms transform remnants into compost near a pair of benches upholstered with the no-fun reminder "food = waste." Through Sept. 14. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, noon to 6.)

SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK
Broadway at Vernon Blvd., Long Island City (718-956-1819)—As artists in converted-trailer studios hammer and weld work for this outdoor gallery's next group show, the park around them thrives. One work, a small prefab house filled with water from the East River, by Yoko Inoue and Troy Richards, sits peacefully among its more permanent companions, including "Wind Gamelan," a set of Rube Goldbergian chimes, by Bill and Mary Buchen, which ring when the breeze turns a windmill, propelling an attached handle to drop a hinged mallet on a xylophone pipe. In the front yard, mismatched lawn furniture suffers the effects of the weather; in the back, several cranes, looking as elegant as their namesakes, are parked near a rusting, weed-encrusted dolly sporting the bumper sticker "Start Seeing Sculpture." Through Oct. 6. (Open daily, 10 to sunset.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

AVIGDOR ARIKHA
Oils, drawings, and pastels by the Paris-based artist. Through Oct. 5. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 541-4900.)

EDWIN DICKINSON
Figure studies, still-lifes, and landscapes of Wellfleet, Massachusetts. Opens Sept. 12. (De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 262-5050.)

TREY FRIEDMAN
Figurative paintings full of eerie implications in a palette mixed from red, yellow, blue, and white. Through Sept. 28. (David Findlay, Jr., 41 E. 57th St. 486-7660.)

TOLAND GRINNELL
"A Mobile Home & Other Necessities," a suite of elaborately impractical luxury items, including a thirty-four-piece luggage set that includes His and Her sinks and a portable wine cellar. Through Oct. 19. (Mary Boone, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 752-2929.)

JAMES MC GARRELL
Intimately scaled narrative paintings on classical and domestic subjects. Opens Sept. 12. (George Adams, 41 W. 57th St. 644-5665.)

MARYAN
Paintings, works on paper, and linoleum cuts by the Polish artist and Holocaust survivor, born Pinchas Burstein, whose work appeared in the 1969 Whitney show "Human Condition/Personal Torment." Through Oct. 12. (Baumgold, 74 E. 79th St. 861-7338.)

ANDREW MASULLO
Sprightly, colorful abstract works full of disarmingly immediate graphic pleasantries. Through Oct. 19. (Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. 397-6780.)

MICHAEL MAZUR
A suite of forty-one etchings illustrating Dante's Inferno, presented alongside translations by Robert Pinsky. Opens Sept. 17. (Mary Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. 397-0669.)

ALIX PEARLSTEIN
Videos and photographs that examine the interplay of four people posing as mother, father, son, and daughter. Through Oct. 5. (Artemis Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 445-0444.)

BETYE SAAR
Thirty assemblages in a series called "Colored: Consider the Rainbow," which takes on skin-tint prejudice within the black community. Opens Sept. 12. (Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. 247-0082.)

RAY SMITH
Photo-lithographs, large-scale digital photographs of gunships and female anatomy, and a twenty-six-foot mural of an aircraft carrier. Through Oct. 5. (Ramis Barquet, 41 E. 57th St. 644-9090.)

VALERIE VON BETZEN
Oil-on-panel works of twilight scenes in the city and suburbs. Through Sept. 28. (Perlow, 41 E. 57th St. 644-7171.)

"THE HEAVENLY TREE GROWS DOWNWARD"
Complicated decorative painting by three painters, Harry Smith, Fred Tomaselli, and Phillip Taaffe, who share an interest in alchemy, folklore, psychoactive plants, and other neurostimulants. Through Oct. 19. (James Cohan, 41 W. 57th St. 755-7171.)

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

DOUG AITKEN
Two video installations: "New Skin," a four-channel projection on oval screens, and "On," on four circular screens. Opens Sept. 14. (303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121.)

ALEX BEARD
Ink on canvas and related drawings made with a quill pen and watercolors, loosely inspired by "Candide." Through Oct. 3. (Briggs Robinson, 527 W. 29th St. 560-9075.)

DIANA COOPER
Idiosyncratic paintings, construction-installations, and works on paper that are often called "para-paintings." Through Oct. 12. (Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. 727-3323.)

ANN CRAVEN
Large-scale portrait-like paintings of birds and deer in flowery, grassy, or arboreal settings. Through Oct. 5. (Gasser & Grunert, 524 W. 19th St. 807-9494.)

RUSSELL CROTTY
Lucite spheres covered with drawings done in "archival" ballpoint pen. Through Oct. 26. (CRG, 535 W. 22nd St. 229-2766.)

ROLAND FLEXNER / IONA ROZEAL BROWN
Ink drawings featuring burst ink bubbles. / Drawings based on ukiyo-e prints that give typically Japanese characters blackface and Afros. Through Oct. 12. (Caren Golden, 526 W. 26th St. 727-8304.)

JAMES HYDE
Inventive works, in cast glass, fresco, papier-mâché, and nylon strapping, displayed on floor, wall, ceiling, and, in one case, inflated until the piece fills the room. Through Oct. 5. (Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. 929-2262.)

MIKI LEE
Paintings made of vertical stripes of inch-wide zigzags, in a startling array of complementary color groups that suggest emotional or meditative states. Through Oct. 5. (Lyonswier, 511 W. 25th St. 242-6220.)

MICHEL MAJERUS
Paintings in mix-and-match styles chosen from popular culture and art history (e.g., Space Invaders and Frank Stella), by the Berlin-based artist. Through Oct. 19. (Petzel, 535 W. 22nd St. 680-9467.)

KARL MANN
If Joseph Cornell and the young Robert Rauschenberg shared a stall in a flea market, it might resemble this sprawling exhibition by a prolific self-taught artist who cobbles together collages and assemblages from urban junk (with a special penchant for plastic doll heads). The exhaustive show is billed as a retrospective, but the vast majority of work dates from the past four years (the curators appear to have edited nothing). The early work is the most arresting, including "In Memoriam," from 1964, a blue-stained pillow that wears a plastic orchid like a heart on its sleeve. Through Sept. 29. (The Viewing Room, 114 W. 17th St. 638-1920.)

JOHN MORRIS
More than a hundred drawings made with carefully built-up surfaces of wax crayon, acrylic, ink, graphite, gesso, and ballpoint pen. Through Oct. 5. (D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 352-9460.)

ELLIOT PUCKETTE
In a Zen variation on a grade-school art-class technique (scratching black-crayon-covered paper to reveal colors layered underneath), Puckette scratches ink-washed canvases to reveal layers of white. Her undulating, sassily flouncing lines mimic milk swirling in coffee, smoke rising, and clouds moving—the artist cites Constable's skies as an influence. Their curvy, razor-incised calligraphy can also look, up close, like Arabic or a colorful John Cage score, though it is Puckette's great pleasure to mimic the conventions of script without actually offering anything to read. Through Oct. 12. (Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave., at 26th St. 563-4474.)

KARIM RASHID
"Mutablob" sculptures and related digital paintings and ceramics. Through Oct. 5. (Gering, 534 W. 22nd St. 646-336-7183.)

SCOTT RICHTER
A group of works somewhere between sculpture and painting made with colorful and huge masses of oil paint on tables and hanging from the walls. Through Oct. 5. (Harris, 529 W. 20th St. 463-9666.)

LORDY RODRIGUEZ
An installation made up of videos and drawings of four one-hour car trips. The videos show the view of the road from the vantage point of an automobile grille. Through Oct. 12. (Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937.)

JULIA SCHER
An installation made up of security blankets, surveillance equipment, and high-tech plastics. Through Oct. 12. (Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. 627-6000.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

AS FOUR
Sculpture, paintings, fashion, and performances by the fashion collective. Through Sept. 21. (Deitch Projects Annex, 18 Wooster St. 343-7300.)

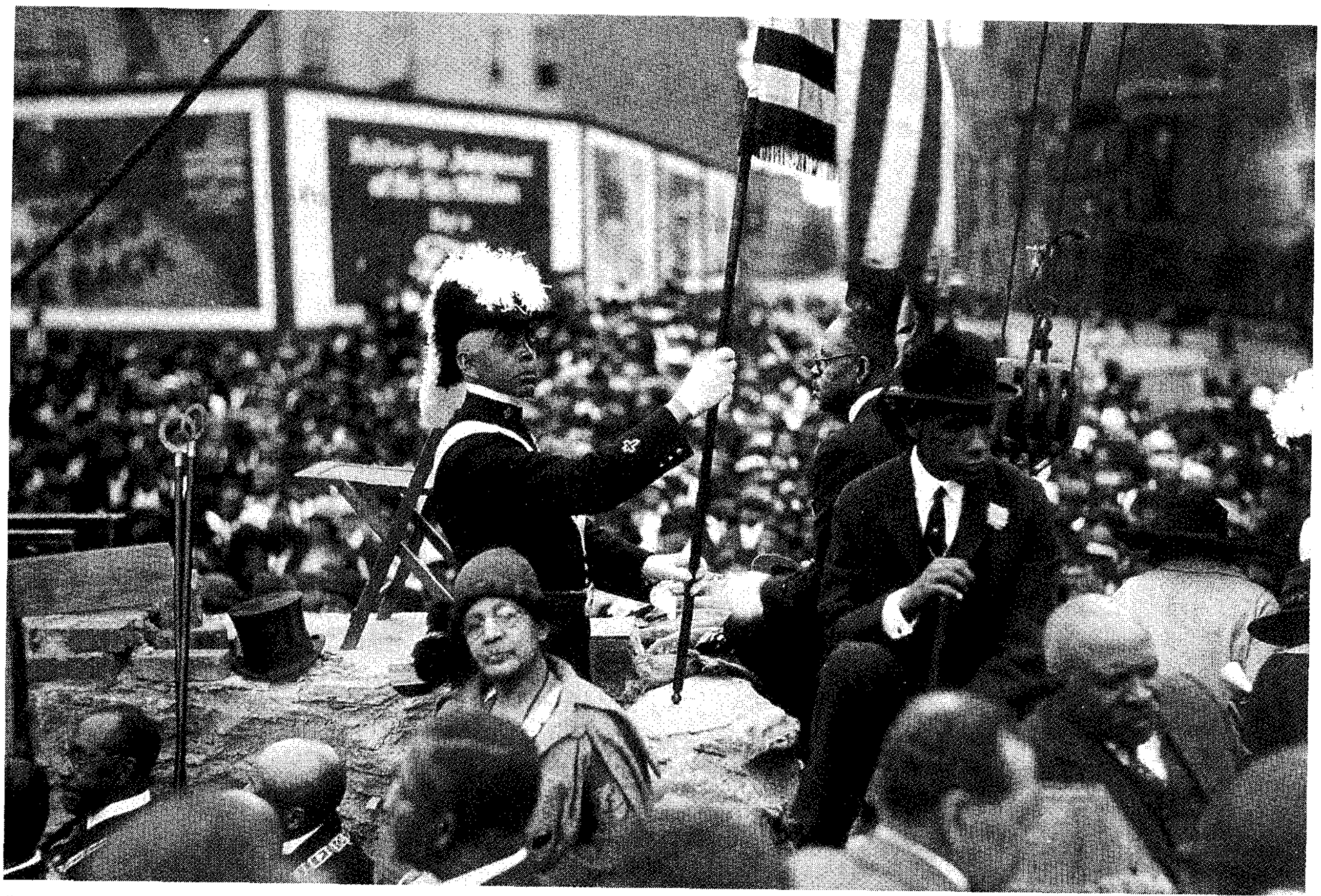
JOHN BISBEE
Sculptures made of twelve-inch spikes. Through Oct. 4. (Plane Space, 102 Charles St. 917-606-1268.)

CHUCK CONNELLY
Richly colored paintings of Philadelphia and other scenes. Through Oct. 12. (Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. 941-0012.)

RICHARD WOODS
"Super Tudor," an installation filled with a variety of architectural styles: faux garden sculptures, mock parquetry, salon-style wall hangings, and a Tudor-style exterior. Through Oct. 19. (Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 343-7300.)

GALLERIES—BROOKLYN AND QUEENS

NINA KATCHADOURIAN
New Yorkers are used to the sirens of their habitat. But what if car alarms were just another species of organic song? From this quixotic premise comes Katchadourian's public-art project "Natural Car Alarms," sponsored by the Sculpture Center and migrating through the curbs of Queens, from MOMA QNS to the Sculpture Center, Socrates Sculpture Park, and P.S. 1. Her rigged cars are identifiable only by their sunny yellow bumper stickers and windshield decals of birds. But once



"Marcus Garvey at a U.N.I.A. Parade, NYC," taken in 1926 by James VanDerZee, at Rosenfeld.

the flock starts squawking, chirping, and shrieking, heads snap around in double and triple takes. Through Sept. 22. (Sculpture Center, 44-19 Purves St., Long Island City. For dates and locations, call 718-361-1750, or visit www.sculpture-center.org.)

"CONSUMING PLACES"
When Creative Time couldn't get its usual summer exhibition space, the Brooklyn Bridge Anchorage, the organization traded up to three vast structures even closer to the waterfront. Naturally, this year's show is enamored of architecture, from 212Box LLC's glass-walled studio apartments cum billboards, designed to be attached to the sides of buildings, to the sound installation of bridge-area ambient noise, circa 1983, installed by Bill Fontana in one of the neighborhood's most exhilarating landmarks, the Tobacco Warehouse. The building's worn brick walls, wide arched windows looking out onto the city, and lack of a roof give it the quality of a Roman ruin that recalls our industrial glory days. Through Oct. 27. (16 Main St., at Water St. 212-206-6674.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

ANNEÈ OLOFSSON
For these large, color self-portraits, Olofsson combed her hair down her back, donned a tight, skin-colored shirt, and asked her father to run his hands under its stretchy fabric while she was photographed from behind. The outline of his fingers appears on her shoulders, at her elbows, at her waist, and then, in one hard-to-decipher shot, in her hair. Whatever the subjects' relationship, the images suggest an uncomfortable closeness, if not an infestation of alien offspring about to pop out of the flesh. Proving that more isn't always more, a video of the pair driving around town in masks and talking dirty isn't half as disturbing. Through Oct. 5. (Boesky, 535 W. 22nd St. 680-9889.)

EUGENE RICHARDS
Richards is arguably the most empathetic photographer working when it comes to showing the hard parts of people's lives. His record of his wife's fight with and death from breast cancer and his chronicles of inner-city drug users (collected in the books "Exploding Into Life" and "Cocaine Blue, Cocaine True") are harrowing and extraordinarily frank. Immediately after the attacks of September 11th, Richards hit the streets, visited people's homes, and attended funerals in search of images that might document the violence and loss that affected so many people that day. Once again, Richards has wrought a personal elegy for those who are just learning to cope with what has happened to them. Through Oct. 2. (Open Mondays through Fridays.) (Aperture/Burden, 20 W. 23rd St. 505-5555.)

JAMES VAN DER ZEE
James VanDerZee was born in 1886, in Lenox, Massachusetts, and moved to New York in 1905. He worked at a number of odd jobs (including darkroom assistant to a Newark department-store photographer), but when his sister, who ran a music conservatory out of her Harlem home, asked VanDerZee to work there with her, his career as the preëminent photographic eye of the Harlem Renaissance took off. VanDerZee documented the streets and photographed local luminaries and schoolchildren, often in elaborately art-directed tableaux. Portraits such as "At Home, Josephine Becton," from 1934, which shows a proud matron in hat and gloves, place the subject firmly in an haut-bourgeois milieu. VanDerZee was also the official photographer of Marcus Garvey's organization, the United Negro Improvement Association, and a politicized perspective comes through in a picture taken in 1924 of a gorgeous black woman with her hands on the shoulders of her young white charge, who in turn holds a sign that says "Service with a Smile." Opens Sept. 12. (Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. 247-0082.)

"NEW PHOTOGRAPHY"
In a strong bid to get people back downtown, the nonprofit group Wall Street Rising presents a crash course in contemporary photography in the lobby of the Exchange building. Large-scale newish work in color—most of which has been shown in New York in the last year or two—by luminaries such as William Eggleston, Lorna Simpson, Robert Mapplethorpe, and Cindy Sherman—is mixed with the work of up-and-coming social observers like Dana Hoey (girls), Jessica Craig-Martin (socialites), and the very funny Anthony Goicolea (boys playing tug-of-war with a pug). It's rare to see so much topflight work in the same place, and rarer yet in the gallery-free financial district. Through Sept. 15. (The Exchange, 25 Broad St. 509-0300.)

Short List

RUVEN AFANADOR
Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. 223-1059.
Through Sept. 14.

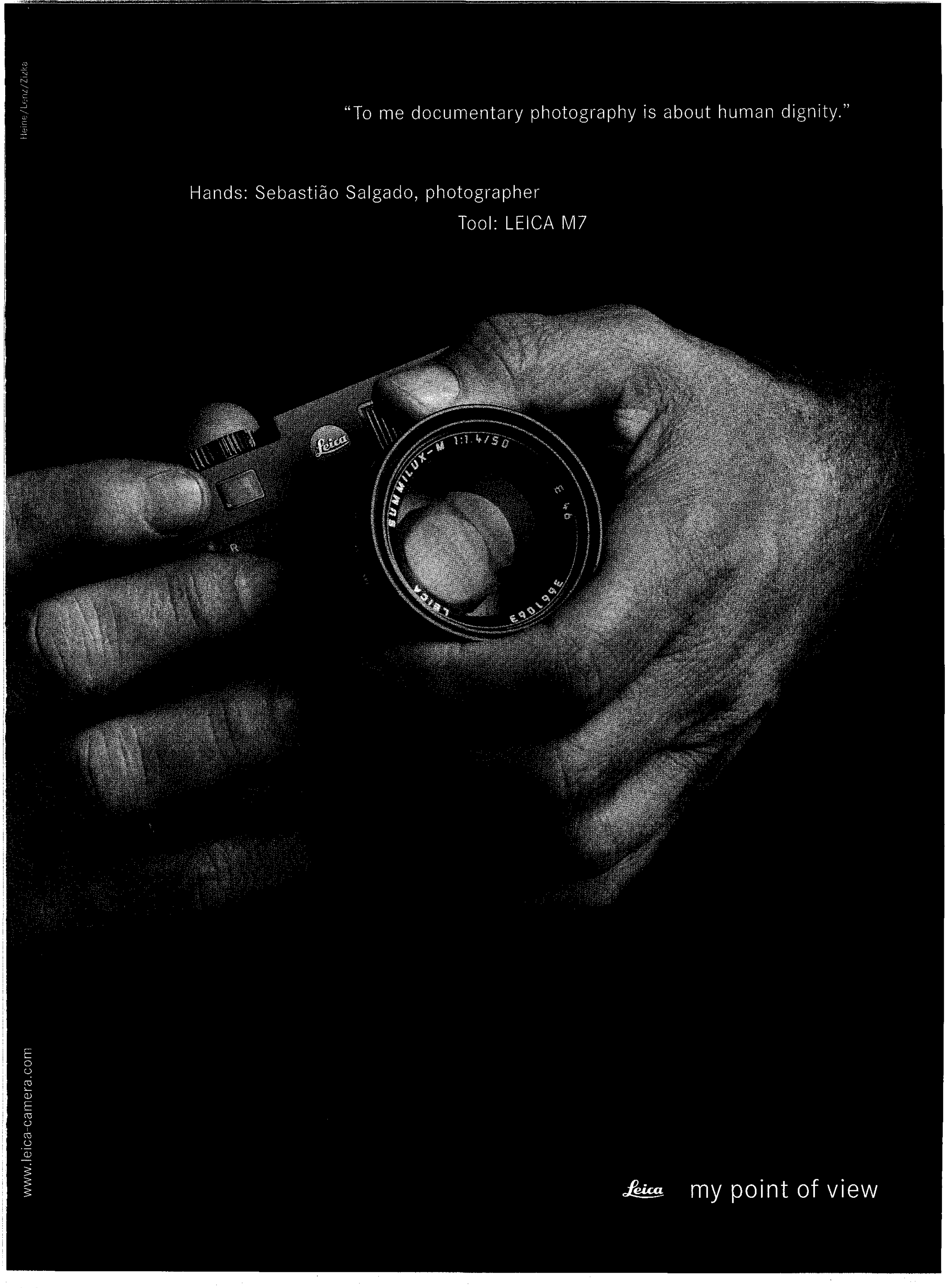
JOHN COFFER
Melville, 213 Water St. 748-8600.
Through Oct. 10.

DAVID LA CHAPPELLE / DENNIS HOPPER
Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. 274-9300.
Through Sept. 21.

"ELEVATED CITY"
New York Transit Museum, Grand Central Terminal, Gallery Annex. 878-0106.
Through Nov. 6.

CLASSICAL MUSIC
OPERA

NEW YORK CITY OPERA
Jake Heggie's **"Dead Man Walking"** was such a tumultuous success at its San Francisco première, in 2000, that a New York production was inevitable; since it has a libretto by Terrence McNally, you could say the piece is coming home. Based on the book by Sister Helen Prejean (which inspired, in turn, the Tim Robbins movie), it's an ideal vehicle for McNally's clever stagecraft and Heggie's emotionally direct music. It arrives at City Opera in a new staging by Leonard Foglia, with Joyce DiDonato and Sheryl Woods in the roles of Prejean and Mrs. Patrick De Rocher (originally performed by Susan Gra-



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ham and Frederica von Stade); John Packard reprises his gripping performance as Joseph De Rocher, the condemned man. The conductor is John DeMain. (Sept. 13 at 8, Sept. 15 at 1:30, and Sept. 17 at 7:30.) ♦ Everyone knows "O mio babbino caro," the pleading soprano aria that lies at the center of Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi." The piquant little comedy, inspired by a few lines from Dante, closes **"Il Trittico,"** a rarely staged ensemble of three Puccini one-acts. The other two are the riveting "Il Tabarro," a gritty bit of Grand Guignol set among the stevedores of Paris, and "Suor Angelica," a sentimental religious tragedy that demands an overpowering performance of the title role. Patrizia Zanardi offers her first City Opera performances in "Gianni Schicchi," as Lauretta, Gianni's love-struck daughter (who gets to sing that lovely aria), and Maria Kanyova takes on the formidable challenge of Sister Angelica; but the big news vocally is likely to be Mark Delavan, a robust American baritone on the brink of a major career, who plays the murderous Michele in "Tabarro" and comes back to sing the role of the crafty Schicchi. The director is James Robinson; George Manahan conducts. (Sept. 14 at 1:30.) ♦ **"Don Giovanni,"** with Mel Ulrich (in the title role), Pamela Armstrong, Marquita Lister, Rinat Shaham, John Tessier, and Kevin Burdette; Manahan. (Sept. 14 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

AMATO OPERA

The East Village's feisty pocket opera company opens its season with **"Madama Butterfly."** As always, the musical and stage director is Anthony Amato, who opened the company, with his late wife, Sally, fifty-five years ago. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Sept. 14 at 7 and Sept. 15 at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

IN MEMORY OF FATHER MYCHAL JUDGE

Judge, the beloved chaplain of the New York City Fire Department, was also a priest at the Church and Friary of St. Francis of Assisi, long the home of Gwendolyn Toth's early-music ensemble, Artek. In memory of Judge and the victims of September 11th, she has assembled a special orchestra and choir (which will feature members of the West Village Chorale and the Barnard-Columbia Chorus) for a memorial performance of the Fauré Requiem. (135 W. 31st St. Sept. 11 at 7:30. No tickets required.)

"LUX AETERNA"

The choirs of Cambridge University's Clare College and of St. Michael's Church combine to perform a concert in memory of the victims of September 11th, featuring music by Herbert Howells ("Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing") and by such contemporary composers as Nicholas White (a Kyrie, for saxophone and choir) and John Rutter (the Requiem, which Rutter will conduct). (St. Michael's Church, 225 W. 99th St., at Amsterdam Ave. Sept. 11 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

CHOIR OF KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON

No, not *that* King's College Choir. Cambridge's London counterpart, a mixed choir of men and women, sings a concert of sacred music by Guerrero, Bach, Poulenc, and Stanford. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. 378-0222. Sept. 17 at 7:30.)

RECITALS

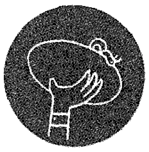
"SPRING WILL COME AGAIN"

The pianist Steven Blier accompanies a group of Juilliard student singers and some alumni (including Lauren Skuce and Monica Yunus) for a solemn evening of songs and poetry by Bernstein, Corigliano, Rorem, Plath, O'Hara, Shakespeare, Lennon and McCartney, and others. (Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, Lincoln Center. Sept. 11 at 6. Free tickets, which are required, are available at the Juilliard Box Office, 60 Lincoln Center Plaza. For more information, call 769-7406.)

GALILEO'S DAUGHTERS

According to recent scholarship, seventeenth-century Italian nunneries were hotbeds of musical activity, something not always approved of by the diocesan male hierarchy. The Daughters—a trio whose members combine experience in both classical music and jazz—perform a forty-minute program of music by three notable composer-nuns (including Chiara Margarita Cozzolani, abbess of the convent of St. Radegonda). (St. Francis of Assisi Church, 135 W. 31st St. Sept. 12 at 1:15. No tickets required.)

TABLES FOR TWO



THE BASIL

206 W. 23rd St. (242-1014)—Over Labor Day weekend, this sleek little Thai spot near the Chelsea Hotel was a lot emptier than it should have been, even with the holiday exodus. At seven-thirty, four waiters buzzed around the sole table of diners; at the bar was a couple who'd dropped in for the drinks and, apparently, to discuss astrology. "If I were a Cancer," a woman told the smiling hostess, who had made the mistake of revealing her sign, "I would have killed myself a long time ago. . . . I hope you have an outlet."

She should also hope that the Basil will catch on the way its two Village relatives, Holy Basil and Little Basil, have. There are plenty of dishes on the small menu whose presentation, freshness, and not-too-alarming ratio of invention to tradition make the place, along with a good wine list, exceptional among Manhattan's Thai restaurants (it's also a bit more expensive, but it's worth it). The main courses are substantial, so starting off with a lighter appetizer is not a bad idea; the green-papaya salad (shredded in a cylindrical mound atop tomato and a couple of nicely grilled shrimp, in fish sauce and lime) is appetizing in the true sense of the word. It is perfectly fine to skip the soups, but if you must have a dish reminiscent of the familiar stuff that arrives at your door by bike, the noodles are good, especially the egg noodles: they come in a star-anise-and-cinnamon broth in which bok choy and beef that has the texture of good brisket have been stewed; it's all topped with thin slices of very rare beef. The entrées include terrific fish dishes, a porterhouse steak with sautéed morning glory, frog's legs with pickled bok choy, and a moist Cornish hen with mango salad. But the two big winners are marinated rack of lamb, whose double-cut ribs come really rare if you request, with sautéed eggplant and chili peppers, and the duck, which has a sweet-and-spicy coconut sauce and what looks like a pair of piroulines but is actually duck-and-litchi rolls. The only two real desserts, fruit and sorbet, are perfectly refreshing; this is no time for chocolate cake. (Open daily for dinner only; entrées $12-$25.)

—*Emily Nunn*

BARGEMUSIC

Sept. 12-13 at 7:30: Pieces for strings by Beethoven, including the Serenade for Violin, Viola, and Cello, Op. 8, and the String Quartets in D Major and C Minor, from Op. 18. The players include the cellist Nicholas Canellakis and his sister, the violinist Karina Canellakis. ♦ Sept. 14 at 7:30 and Sept. 15 at 4: The violist Melissa Reardon, along with two more siblings, the brothers Jacobsen (Colin and Eric, on violin and cello, respectively), and others, performs the String Trio in E-Flat Major, Op. 3, the Op. 74 String Quartet (the "Harp") in the same key, and the humorous "Eyeglass Duet" for viola and cello. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

GLASS FARM ENSEMBLE

The way-out, downtown concert collective (featuring the guitarist Oren Fader and the pianist Yvonne Troxler) performs music by Stockhausen ("Zodiac"), Tüür, and Rzewski, along with new solo guitar pieces by William Anderson, Jennifer Louis Griffith, Ben Jackle, and others. (Glass Farm Concert Loft, 438 W. 37th St. Sept. 14 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER TRIO

When most early-music keyboard players perform music from the late eighteenth century "authentically," they sit down at a fortepiano, that lighter, sweeter precursor to the grander modern instrument. But the harpsichord still held on in places, and some works were published "for fortepiano or harpsichord." Elaine Comparone (accompanied by the violinist Robert Zubrycki and the cellist Peter Seidenberg) celebrates the twilight of the instrument with a recital of music by Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven. (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 15 at 2.)

SOHEIL NASSERI

This young pianist, whose nighttime wanderings among Manhattan's smart set were recently chronicled in the *Observer*, has been working hard at musical success as well; he's a regular not only at such watering holes as Lotus and Bungalow 8 but at Weill Recital Hall, where he gave a series of solo concerts last season. Nasseri must possess a big technique at the very least, since the centerpiece of his latest recital will include the belated world première of "Sonata No. 0," by Kaikhosru Sorabji (1892-1988), the English composer-pianist whose elaborate and exotic solo works are infamous for their extreme difficulty. His program also includes premières by Ronn Yedidia and Samuel Zyman and Schubert's Sonata in A Major, D. 959. (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 17 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

REMEMBRANCES

The following is a brief selection of events marking the anniversary of last year's terrorist attacks. On Sept. 11, starting at 8:46 A.M. with a tolling of the bells, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine hosts a daylong program that includes a reading of the victims' names, musical meditations, and, at 7, a concert with Richie Havens, Joan Osborne, and other singers. (Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 316-7540.) ♦ Sept. 11 at 8: Paul Auster, Vivian Gornick, John Guare, Grace Schulman, Art Spiegelman, and others read from their contributions to the anthology "110 Stories: New York Writes After September 11," and the baritone Sanford Sylvan performs Baroque renditions of the Bible's Book of Lamentations, along with J. S. Bach's "Ich habe genug" ("I have enough"). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5500.) ♦ Sept. 11 at 9: The performance artist Bill Talen, who goes by the name Reverend Billy, leads his Stop Shopping Gospel Choir in a salute to the peace activists who have answered September 11th with renewed dedication. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. No tickets necessary.)

SAN GENNARO FESTIVAL

A cannoli-eating contest on Sept. 12 at 2 marks the return of the annual alfresco celebration featuring zeppole, arcade games, and crowded sidewalks in Little Italy. (Mulberry St. between Canal and E. Houston Sts. Through Sept. 22.)

READINGS

Sept. 17 at 7: Fran Capo offers passages from her novel "Almost a Wise Guy." (The Corner Bookstore, Madison Ave. at 93rd St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ Sept. 17 at 8: The *Paris Review* editor George Plimpton leads a reading of "Alamo," a radio play by Rick Moody. (Culture Project, 45 Bleecker St. For more information, call 861-0016.)

TALKS

Sept. 12 at 7:30: The Polish writer Ryszard Kapuscinski discusses the notions of the First World and the Third World with the South African poet Breyten Breytenbach. (Hemmerdinger Hall, N.Y.U. Main Building, 100 Washington Sq. E. No tickets necessary.) ♦ Sept. 13 at 7: Following a screening of Aradhana Seth's BBC documentary "Dam/age," the Indian novelist Arundhati Roy talks with the filmmaker about the grassroots political struggle against dams in India's Narmada Valley. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Tickets at the door.)

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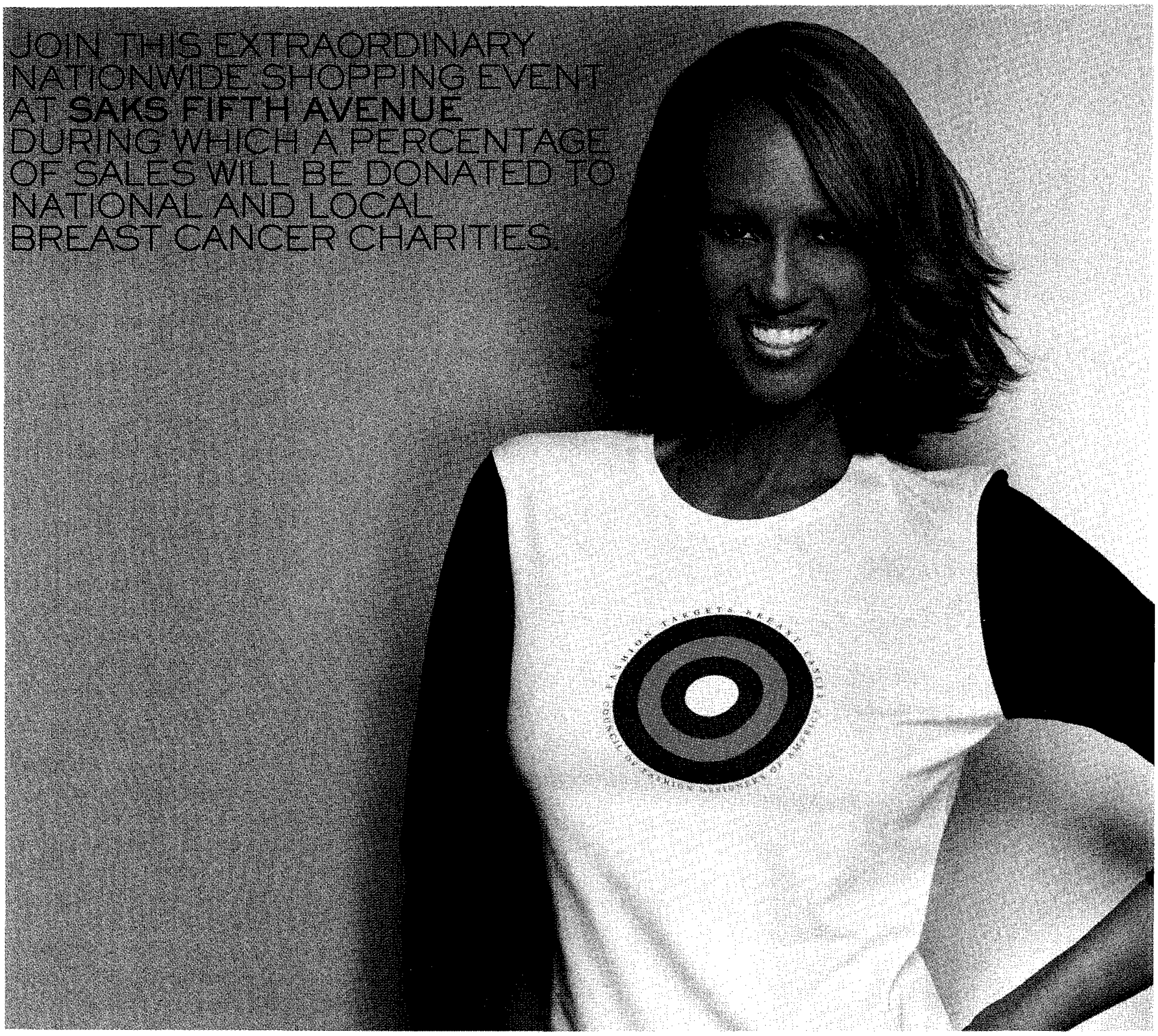

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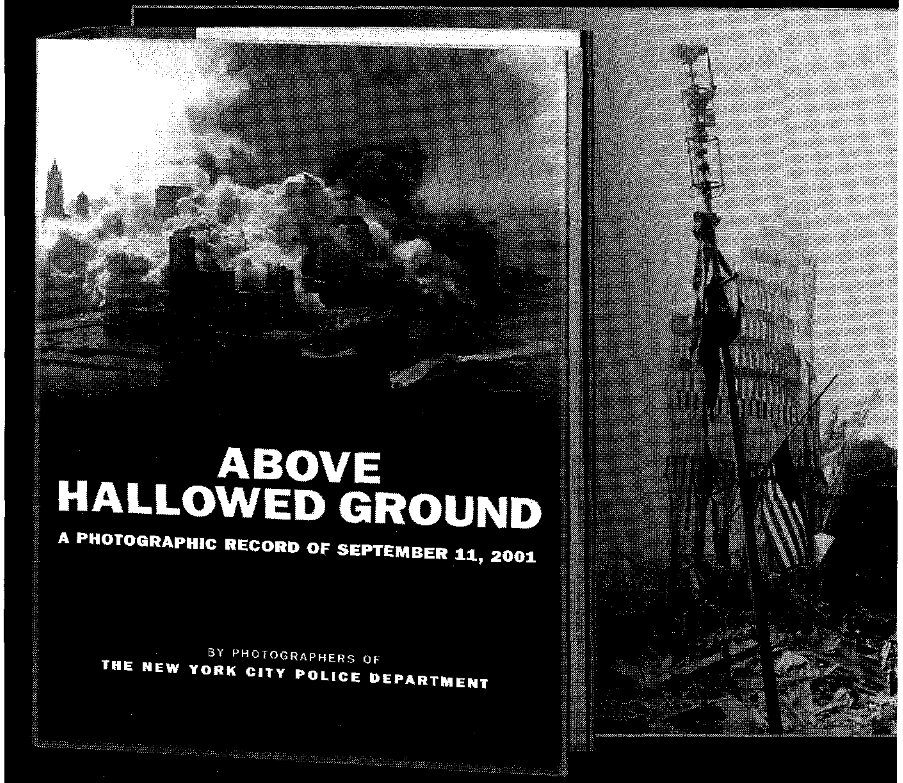

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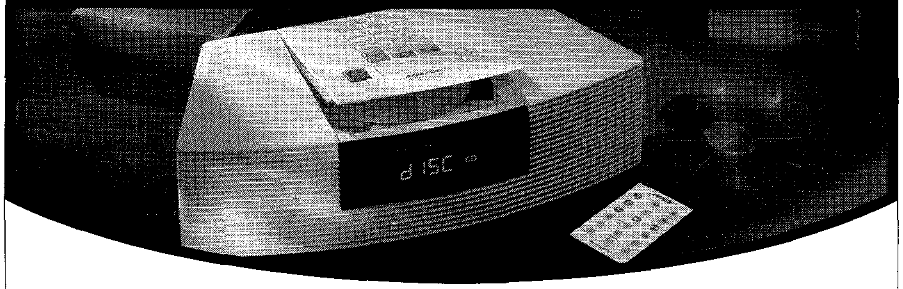

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BOOK CURRENTS

Change Will Do You Good

Ovid's Metamorphoses, says Madeleine Foray, "changes in the hands of each new translator and adapter." Her introduction to a new edition of Arthur Golding's 1567 English translation of the **METAMORPHOSES** (Johns Hopkins) shows how he Christianizes Ovid, transforming his temples into churches with spires. The translation was influential with Shakespeare and Spenser, but its bombastic style later fell out of fashion. One recent editor complains that Golding turned "the sophisticated Roman into a ruddy country gentleman with tremendous gusto and a gift for energetic doggerel."

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

A few years ago, the sensual savagery of Ted Hughes's **TALES FROM OVID** (Farrar, Straus, & Giroux) won wide acclaim. Meanwhile, novels like David Malouf's **AN IMAGINARY LIFE** (Vintage) and Jane Alison's **THE LOVE ARTIST** (Picador) have built their narratives on what little we know of Ovid's actual biography. In Malouf's book, Ovid finds and civilizes a feral child, in a clever reversal of the people-to-animal transformations of the Metamorphoses. Most recently, Mary Zimmerman's award-winning play **METAMORPHOSES** (Northwestern) presents the work as a parable about the healing power of love.

By contrast, Alessandro Boffa's comic novel, **YOU'RE AN ANIMAL, VISKOVITZ!** (Knopf), sees metamorphosis as a cosmic bad joke; the hero is figured as a different animal in each chapter. During his time as a snail, he acts out an undignified parody of the Narcissus myth; Viskovitz is attracted by his own reflection in water, but the consummation makes for one of the oddest sex scenes of recent years: "I felt the warm pressure of the rhinophor slipping under my shell, and a strong agitation froze the center of my being."

—*Leo Carey*

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MOVIES OPENING

ALIAS BETTY
Claude Miller directed this thriller about a slightly unhinged mother (Nicole Garcia) who kidnaps a boy when her daughter's son dies in a household accident. With Sandrine Kiberlain and Mathilde Seigner. In French. Opening Sept. 13.

BARBERSHOP
Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening Sept. 13.

IGBY GOES DOWN
A rebellious prep-school student (Kieran Culkin) goes on the lam in New York City, in a drama directed by Burr Steers. With Susan Sarandon, Ryan Phillippe, Claire Danes, and Amanda Peet. Opening Sept. 13.

THE PINOCHET CASE
Patricio Guzmán ("The Battle of Chile") directed this documentary about the attempt to bring the Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet to trial, following his arrest in London in 1998. In Spanish. Opening Sept. 11. (Film Forum.)

QUITTING
Jia Hongsheng plays himself in the story of his successful rise as a film actor and subsequent mental breakdown. The cast includes his real parents, doctors, and friends. Zhang Yang ("Shower") directed. In Mandarin. Opening Sept. 13.

STEALING HARVARD
A comedy about a regular guy (Jason Lee) who takes up a life of crime in order to pay for his niece's college tuition. With Tom Green and Leslie Mann. Directed by Bruce McCulloch. Opening Sept. 13.

SWIMMING
Lauren Ambrose ("Six Feet Under") plays a local girl who works at her father's beachside burger bar in a coming-of-age drama set in Myrtle Beach. Opening Sept. 13.

THE TRANSPORTER
An action film directed by Corey Yuen ("The One"), in which an ex-Special Forces operator (Jason Statham) works as a professional courier, no questions asked. Opening Sept. 13.

FILM NOTES

BARBERSHOP
A mellow, good-spirited comedy set on the South Side of Chicago, in which a restless young man (Ice Cube) comes to understand the value of his father's business. There's the college-educated barber (Sean Patrick Thomas), the rap-star barber (Eve), the gangster barber (Michael Ealy), the white b-boy barber (Troy Garity), and an old guy who plays checkers all day. These characters bounce off each other according to type, but every now and then someone gets off an original line. The most impressive performance is given by Cedric the Entertainer. Made up to look like a latter-day Frederick Douglass, he's a raspy-voiced sage unafraid to take down Rosa Parks, of all people. His rants get the whole shop up in arms, with everyone cracking wise.—*Michael Agger* (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

BLUE CRUSH
"Flashdance" with waves. A teen-ager (Kate Bosworth) from the wrong side of the tracks works hard to win a surfing competition and falls in love with a visiting N.F.L. player, learning a valuable lesson about empowerment in the process. The film, set in Hawaii, is basically a non-stop music video with some tired plotting thrown in. Not that this distracts in any way from the spectacularly shot surfing scenes (the sound design—crashing waves, giant swells—must be about the best ever recorded) and a cast (which includes Michelle Rodriguez and Sanoe Lake, among others) that's buffed, toned, and minimally clad for maximum viewing pleasure.—*Bruce Diones* (Battery Park 16, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Union Square.)

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CITY BY THE SEA
For long stretches, Robert De Niro, speaking in quiet, even tones, keeps this dolorous family melodrama on track. He plays Vincent LaMarca, a successful Manhattan homicide detective. His father was a convicted child murderer, and his son, Joey (James Franco), whom he hasn't seen in years, is a junkie living like a rat under the boardwalk of Long Beach, Long Island. As if all these troubles weren't enough, Joey kills a drug dealer in a fight, and then is suspected by the police of also killing a cop. Even though the story is based in fact, "City by the Sea" offers an almost grotesque pileup of tragedies. Will Vincent arrest his own son? Are the sins of the fathers visited upon the sons (or, in this case, grandsons)? Ken Hixon's screenplay lays in the Arthur Miller bricks very carefully. But when father and son get together at last, Hixon's writing falls into the turgid clichés of a TV drama. The end is a big letdown.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 9/9/02.) (Astor Plaza, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

COUNSELLOR-AT-LAW
John Barrymore seems an unlikely choice for the ghetto-born lawyer in this 1933 adaptation of Elmer Rice's play, but this is one of the few screen roles that reveal his measure as an actor. His "presence" is apparent in every scene; so are his restraint, his humor, and his zest. The material is success-story-with-heartbreak—a typical American well-made play of the period: energetic, naïve, melodramatic, good-hearted, and full of gold-diggers, social climbers, and dedicated radicals. The director, William Wyler, sticks close to the play and tells the story in a simple, unadorned way, which has the advantage for us now of preserving the theatrical style of the time. With Bebe Daniels, Melvyn Douglas, Doris Henyon, Mayo Methot, Thelma Todd, Onslow Stevens, Isabel Jewell, John Qualen, Vincent Sherman, and, as the horrid stepson, Richard Quine.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum; Sept. 17.)

EVE
They don't come any tonier than Joseph Losey's masochistic 1963 sexual melodrama about a Welsh writer (Stanley Baker) living the dolce vita in the Italy of the Fellini-Antonioni era. He drives his virtuous wife (Virna Lisi) to her death when he can't curb his mad love for a gambling lady (Jeanne Moreau). This destructive dame is named Eve, and the writer's rented house comes complete with a copy of the Masaccio fresco "Expulsion from Paradise." When the camera goes outdoors, it glides among the statuary of Venice and Rome in search of additional metaphors. The images of the great cinematographer Gianni di Venanzo provide the only genuine emotion in the film, but there are plenty of histrionics. This is the kind of baroque blowout in which the femme fatale whips the antihero with a riding crop while repeatedly calling him a loser.—*Michael Sragow* (Thalia Theatre; Sept. 14.)

THE GOOD GIRL
A comedy, darkly told, with a plot that never fails to attract: is there a way out of my narrow life? Jennifer Aniston puts on a Texas accent and plays Justine Last, a clerk at a faceless superstore, which seems to be the new epicenter of modern angst. Her co-workers include a sarcastic goth girl (Zooey Deschanel), a hyper-Christian security guard (Mike White), and a hunky, teen-age malcontent (Jake Gyllenhaal) who oh-so-subtly calls himself Holden. Soon, Justine and Holden are discovering the pleasures of the stockroom together. The movie is well acted and very funny about delusions, especially the writerly kind. It also complicates our loyalties by making Justine's husband (John C. Reilly) a decent, likable guy, even if he does smoke too much pot. Everything seems poised for a great finale, with the melancholic afterglow of a good Raymond Carver story. But the movie loses its tone—tragic moments, including a suicide, get treated in a flimsy way, and camp triumphs over content. Directed by Miguel Arteta and written by White.—*M.A.* (Angelika Film Center, Battery Park 16, Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kew Gardens Cinema, Kips Bay Theatre, Olympia I and II, 62nd & Broadway, and 34th Street Theatre.)

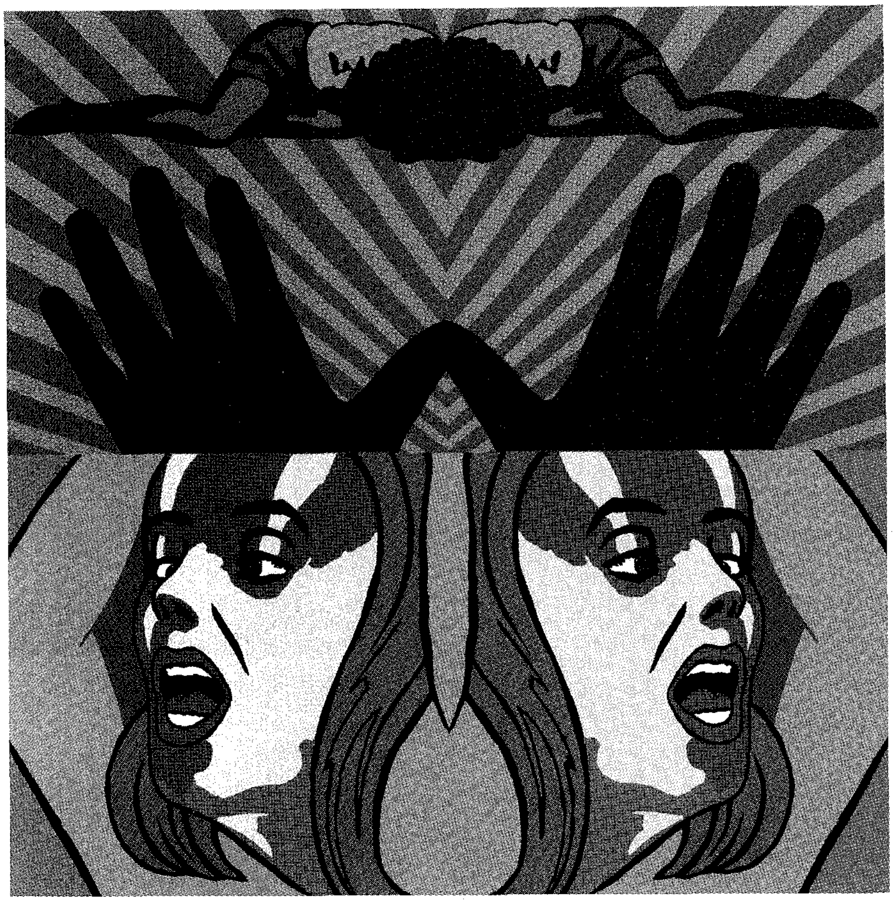
IN PRAISE OF LOVE
The new film from Jean-Luc Godard is carved into two halves. The first is in gliding, rapturous monochrome, the second in angry color, all the more jagged for being shot on digital video. From that contrast springs the whole endeavor. Godard is caught, as so often, between elegy and protest—between a lament for certain ideals, private and political, and splenetic digs at prevailing cultural conditions. There is a story—we follow a dour sort called Edgar (Bruno Putzulu), who is himself trying to cast a movie on the subject of changing love—but the narrative is so diluted that you can't help sensing Godard's indifference to the fates of his characters. Instead, his passion seems to be given over to chastising Hollywood for its abuse of history; America at large also takes a beating, apparently on the ground that the place is not old enough. (What exactly is any country supposed to do about that?) Yet the work, like most of Godard, asks to be seen; its strains of regret tug at you, and hang around in the mind, with a persistence rare in more coherent pictures. In French.—*Anthony Lane* (9/2/02) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

THE LAST KISS
A superb, full-bodied Italian comedy written and directed by Gabriele Muccino. The movie is set in Rome, though it could take place in any large Italian city in which hip, good-looking young people work in a desultory way, cadge off their parents, go to weddings, hang out, and have sex a lot. As the characters long for more love and more freedom, the action is driven forward by a gliding camera that catches everyone in frenetic movement. The actors display prodigious gifts of temperament—that blessed absence of self-consciousness that links Italian opera to Italian comedy and makes so much French, English, and American work seem guarded or skittish by comparison. Muccino has a particular gift for lovers' quarrels, which he lets bloom into hilarious excess. In Italian.—*D.D.* (8/5/02) (Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

THE LAST PICTURE SHOW
This straightforward, involving 1971 picture about growing up in a small town in Texas in the early fifties was Peter Bogdanovich's first great success. It's plain and uncondescending in its re-creation of what it means to be a high-school athlete, of what a country dance hall is like, of the necking in cars and movie houses, and of the desolation that follows high-school graduation. Robert Surtees's stylized cinematography is in black-and-white, and the frequent silhouetting—so that we seem to be looking at a map of life as it was—helps to clarify the subject matter. The film badly needs this stylization, because its shallow overview of town life is dangerously close to TV. The movie suggests what TV soap opera would be if it looked at ordinary experience in a nonexploitative way, if it had observation and humor. This is perhaps an *ideal* TV show. With Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Ellen Burstyn, Cybill Shepherd, Ben Johnson, Eileen Brennan, and Cloris Leachman.—*P.K.* (Pioneer Theater; Sept. 11-17.)

MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
The Second City comic performer Nia Vardalos lights up this low-budget "Moonstruck" about a homely girl and her overly dramatic Greek-immigrant family. When, after a quick makeover, she falls in love with a charming Wasp (John Corbett), her mother, father, and assorted relatives play the in-

evitable culture clash to the hilt. (Much of this material has been culled from Vardalos's effective standup routines.) The cast includes the wonderfully dotty Andrea Martin, Michael Constantine as the ouzo-swigging dad, and everyone's favorite ethnic mom, Lainie Kazan. They bring a pleasant sitcom buzz to the movie.—*B.D.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kew Gardens Cinema, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Theatre, Village East Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.)



At Anthology Film Archives, Harry Smith's "Mahagonny."

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

ONE HOUR PHOTO

Robin Williams in serious mode, playing a nowhere man—Sy Parrish, the photo guy at the mall, who wears wire-frame glasses, a white shirt, and a tie clip that we're meant to take as a kind of emotional chastity belt. Sy becomes unhealthily obsessed with a young and beautiful suburban family—wayward father (Michael Vartan), good mom (Connie Nielsen), and adorable young son (Dylan Smith)—and plasters his wall at home with extra prints of their family snaps. Mark Romanek's psychological thriller features sterile white environments and lots of shots in which Williams is grimly isolated in sinister, hospital-like sets. The movie's experimental tone, however, doesn't disguise a rather low-grade and unpleasant form of suspense. Romanek is caught between making Sy dangerous and making him sympathetic, but any terror or pity we might feel gets crimped by the film's queasy narrative logic, which keeps us in the dark about Sy's nature right down to the unsatisfactory final scene.—*D.D.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kew Gardens Cinema, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

POSSESSION

Neil LaBute's adaptation of A. S. Byatt's novel is disappointingly tepid. Two contemporary literary scholars, a coldly composed British professor (Gwyneth Paltrow) and a scruffy American graduate student (Aaron Eckhart), discover a cache of secret letters exchanged by the great (fictional) Victorian poet Randolph Henry Ash (Jeremy Northam) and an intriguing (fictional) minor poet, Christabel LaMotte (Jennifer Ehle). As the scholars track down evidence of a passionate, illicit love affair between the two poets, they experience their own, neurotic version of love, and LaBute cuts back and forth between past and present. The period recreation is faultless, and the narrative technique very smooth, but the movie never works up much fire. Eckhart gives his best movie performance yet, but you know a film is in trouble when it seems like a frigid version of "The French Lieutenant's Woman."—*D.D.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

SIGNS

A third attempt, on the part of M. Night Shyamalan, to disturb our sleep. This time we are in rural Pennsylvania, home to Graham Hess (Mel Gibson), who used to be a minister and is now a farmer; the story is designed to make him wonder if that was such a smart move. First come the crop circles, then glimpses of green men vanishing into the corn. Hess is skeptical, but his brother (Joaquin Phoenix) and children (Abigail Breslin and Rory Culkin) are more seriously spooked, and with good cause; soon enough, it becomes clear that aliens have landed all over the world in search of human beings and other comforting snacks. Shyamalan takes it easy on the special effects; much of the movie, which skirts dangerously close to the uneventful in its need to draw out the suspense, consists merely of the family sitting around watching TV or waiting for a claw under the door. The ending is far too freighted with spiritual intent, yet, as with "The Sixth Sense," you can neither ignore nor forget the mist of sickly unease, streaked with black humor, that rises out of the plot.—*A.L.* (8/12/02) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema 2, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Olympia I and II, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

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SIMONE
Silly, obvious, but entertaining. Viktor Taransky (Al Pacino), a bedraggled director of "art" films—a vain peacock with a broken tail—hasn't had a hit in ages when he accepts a gift from a dying computer nut: a synthesized female star, her existence confined to a hard disk. Simone (an amalgamation of "Simulation One") is tall, blond, tanned, and big-boned, with a wide mouth and a slightly muzzy voice. When Viktor feeds her into a romantic drama he's shooting, she becomes a sensation. What can Viktor do? He can't produce her for the public, so he tells everyone that she's reclusive, like Garbo, and creates ersatz interviews for the media. The premise is a little tired, but Viktor's desperate antics are quite funny, and Al Pacino, his hair standing up, his eyes glaring, has pulled off a dead-accurate imitation of the late John Cassavetes, a man who could be noble, manic, and full of it all at once. For the record, Simone is not a digital fabrication, but a Canadian model named Rachel Roberts. Written and directed by Andrew Niccol.—*D.D.* (9/9/02) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

LE TROU (THE HOLE)
Jacques Becker's fact-based, final film (he died two weeks after finishing it, in 1960). Pitched between film noir and neorealism, it does for jailbreaks what "Rififi" did for heists. The action follows five cellmates as they carve an escape path beneath the penitentiary walls. Working in black-and-white and without music, Becker establishes a lulling Big House rhythm, then shatters it as soon as the master planner—played by Jean Keraudy, who had the same role in the actual scheme—lifts the corner floorboards and starts digging. The director brings out the dead-serious silent comedy of one prisoner standing on another and balancing around a basement pillar to elude a patrol; he uses the steady sound of a makeshift hammer to convey the continuous intensity of the cellmates' struggle. Four of the five have sharply defined personalities; the fifth, played by Mark Michel (of Jacques Demy's "Lola" and "Umbrellas of Cherbourg"), has the malleability of a male ingénue. Among the non-professional actors here who later turned pro are Philippe Leroy and Michel Constantin. In French.—*M.S.* (BAM Rose Cinemas; Sept. 14-15.)

24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE
Tony Wilson, the Manchester music impresario who founded Factory records in the late seventies—home to Joy Division (later New Order) and Happy Mondays, among others—gets a fevered tribute in Michael Winterbottom's blast of a film. Wilson is played with a brilliant élan by British comic Steve Coogan—a standout performance that captures the dour enthusiasm of Wilson's genius. And Winterbottom's casting of the myriad musician roles is flawless; there isn't a hair style or a body type that seems out of place. The film's direction has the jittery anarchic feel of a good punk song, and the script displays a fast and free humor that indulges in the excesses of a rock-and-roll life.—*B.D.* (BAM Rose Cinemas, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, and Sunshine Cinema.)

XXX
A slovenly rip-off of the James Bond formula, with Vin Diesel as Xander Cage, an extreme-sports athlete who is recruited into intelligence work. Diesel wears tattoos rather than a tuxedo, and eschews shaken-not-stirred alcoholic beverages. He's also rather less interested in sex than Bond. The movie's real draw is its explosions, which spread flames like ketchup across the easily ignited sets. With Martin Csokas caressing his swinish lines as a supervillain and Asia Argento as a witch-eyed shady lady. The movie was not directed; it was launched (by Rob Cohen), in the familiar corporate-schlock style of recent blockbusters, and there are long sequences in which the shots barely hang together.—*D.D.* (8/19 & 26/02) (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

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84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
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59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
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First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.

Kew Gardens Cinema, 81-05 Lefferts Blvd., Queens (718-441-9385).
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
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Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Sept. 11 at 1 and 3: "WTC Uncut" (2002, Bryan Kortis and Steven Mudrick). Free admission. ♦ Through Sept. 29: "Master Class: The Art of Cinematography." Sept. 14 at 2: "Pennies from Heaven" (1981, Herbert Ross), followed by a conversation with the cinematographer Gordon Willis. ♦ Sept. 15 at 2: "All the President's Men" (1976, Alan Pakula). ♦ Sept. 15 at 5: "The Purple Rose of Cairo" (1985, Woody Allen). ♦ Repertory nights. Sept. 14 at 6:30 and Sept. 15 at 7: "Rocco and His Brothers" (1960, Luchino Visconti; in Italian).

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—Starting Sept. 14: Daily screenings of a restored print of Harry Smith's "Mahagonny." This is the director's final work, composed of four synchronized films projected onto one screen, inspired by Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht's opera and set largely in the Chelsea Hotel.

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—Sept. 11 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Manhattan" (1979, Woody Allen). Free admission. ♦ A Jacques Becker retrospective. All films are in French. Sept. 12 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "The Last Ace in the Deck" (1942). ♦ Sept. 13 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Antoine and Antoinette" (1947). ♦ Sept. 14-15 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Le Trou (The Hole)" (†). ♦ "The World According to Shorts." Sept. 16-17 at 6:50 and 9:10: Programs of international short films.

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through Sept. 12: "Kurosawa & Mifune," a retrospective of the director-actor team. Sept. 11-12 at 1, 4:50, and 8:40: "The Seven Samurai" (1954, Akira Kurosawa). ♦ Starting Sept. 13: A William Wyler retrospective. Sept. 13-14 at 3:10 and 7:20: "Wuthering Heights" (1939). ♦ Sept. 13-14 at 1, 5:10, and 9:20: "The Little Foxes" (1941). ♦ Sept. 15-16 at 1, 4:15, and 7:30: "The Best Years of Our Lives" (1946). ♦ Sept. 17 at 1, 4:30, and 8: "The Good Fairy" (1935). ♦ Sept. 17 at 2:55, 6:25, and 9:55: "Counsellor-at-Law" (†).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL
55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Through Dec. 17: "Neo-Noir: Another Shade of Darkness." Sept. 17 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Z" (1969, Costa-Gavras; in French).

PIONEER THEATER
155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300)—Sept. 11-17: A new print of "The Last Picture Show" (†).

THE SCREENING ROOM
54 Varick St. (512-7201)—Starting Sept. 13: "Frame by Frame," a documentary film series sponsored by HBO. Highlights include Alexandra Pelosi's "Journeys with George," an intimate look at George W. Bush on the campaign trail, and "Thoth," the Academy Award-winning portrait of a New York City street performer. For a complete schedule, see http://www.hbo.com/framebyframe.

SUNSHINE CINEMA
139-143 E. Houston St. (358-0573)—Midnight movies. Sept. 13-14: "Elvira's Haunted Hills" (2001, Sam Irvin).

THALIA THEATRE
2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400)—Sept. 14 at 2 and 7: "All About Eve" (1950, Joseph L. Mankiewicz). ♦ Sept. 14 at 4:30 and 9:30: "Eve" (†). ♦ Sept. 15 at 2:30 and 7: "Leave Her to Heaven" (1946, John M. Stahl). ♦ Sept. 15 at 4:30 and 9: "Miss Julie" (1951, Alf Sjöberg; in Swedish).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through Sept. 12: "Whispers in a Distant Corridor: The Cinema of Jacques Tourneur." Sept. 12 at 2, 5:30, and 9: "Phantom Raiders" (1940). ♦ Sept. 12 at 3:45 and 7:15: "They All Come Out" (1939). ♦ Starting Sept. 13: "Tarkovsky at 70." Unless otherwise noted, all films are in Russian. Sept. 13 at 1 and 9:45, Sept. 14 and Sept. 16 at 4, and Sept. 17 at 8:45: "Ivan's Childhood (a.k.a. My Name Is Ivan)" (1962). ♦ Sept. 13 at 3, Sept. 14 at 1, Sept. 15 at 4:30, and Sept. 16 at 1: "Directed by Andrei Tarkovsky" (1988, Michal Leszczylowski; in Swedish) and "The Steamroller and the Violin" (1960). ♦ Sept. 13 at 6 and Sept. 14 at 6:30: "Andrei Rublev" (1969). ♦ Sept. 15 at 1 and Sept. 16 at 6:30: "Solaris" (1972). ♦ Sept. 15 at 7:30 and Sept. 17 at 1 and 6:30: "Mirror (a.k.a. The Looking-Glass)" (1975). ♦ Sept. 16 at 9:30: "One Day in the Life of Andrei Arsenevich" (2000, Chris Marker; in French). ♦ Sept. 17 at 3:15: "Stalker" (1979).

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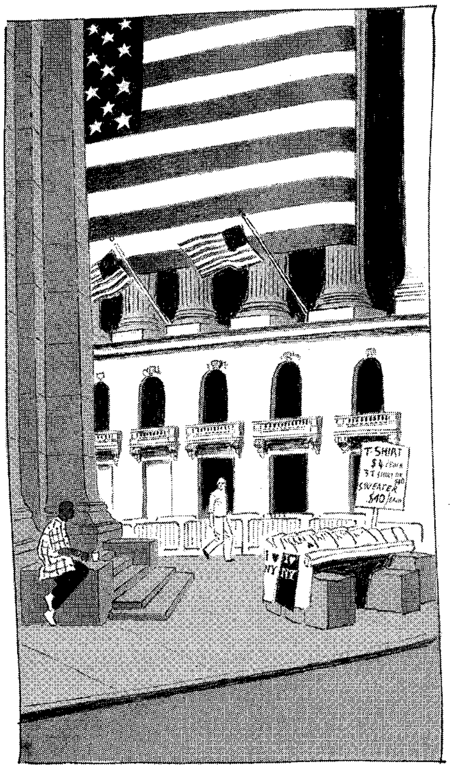
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
A YEAR AFTER

On September 17, 1862, in the Maryland village of Sharpsburg, in the fields between Antietam Creek and the Potomac River, forces of the Union Army defeated Confederate troops under General Robert E. Lee. By nightfall, some five thousand men were dead. Of nearly twenty thousand wounded, one in ten would soon succumb. On that day, the bloodiest in the nation's history, more Americans were killed than in all the other wars fought by the United States between the Continental victory at Yorktown, in 1781, and the landing of the American Expeditionary Force in France, in 1917. By the morning of September 18th, Antietam was a vision of hell. As James M. McPherson writes in "Crossroads of Freedom," his haunting new account, "The detritus of battle lay thickly on the field: smashed weapons and gun carriages, dead horses, scraps of bloody clothing, discarded knapsacks and blanket rolls, and the smell of rotting corpses, vomit, and excrement." In some of the letters of surviving soldiers, there is a sense that the horror would forever escape the capabilities of their language and remain lodged only in their nightmares. One soldier from Pennsylvania wrote home saying, "No tongue can tell, no mind can conceive, no pen portray the horrible sights I witnessed."

At Antietam, for the first time, photographers were able to bring the war's images of torment into focus for all who would care to look. Alexander Gardner and James Gibson, working for the great Mathew Brady and his studio in New York, arrived quickly on the scene at Antietam and began photographing the corpses and the battlefield. When an exhibition of those photographs opened the following October, a particularly sensitive reporter from the *Times* praised Brady's pictures for trying to "bring home to us the terrible reality and earnestness of war," but he, too, was skeptical, doubting their ultimate adequacy. "Homes have been made desolate, and the light of life in thousands of hearts has been quenched forever," he wrote. "All of this desolation imagination must paint—broken hearts cannot be photographed."



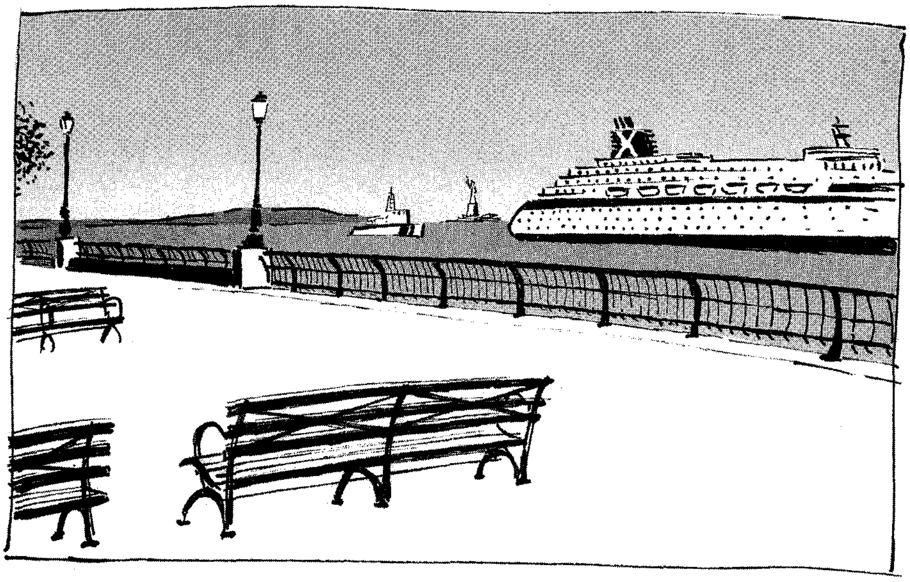
In the hundred and forty years since Antietam, the technologies of depiction have advanced to the point where our experience of a comparable horror—the more than three thousand murders that took place at the southern tip of Manhattan, at the Pentagon, and in Pennsylvania on the morning of September 11, 2001—are infinitely, and inescapably, more immediate. In colors far more vivid than sepia, in video shot from every conceivable angle (from the streets, from roofs, from inside the towers themselves), we have seen, again and again, the tableaux of destruction: the planes crashing into the towers, the air filled with bodies and pulverized concrete, with desks and papers and beams, the towers' collapse.

This week, we remember the dead. It will be an overwhelming commemoration. Some of refined sensibility have complained in advance that the media will exploit this anniversary, that television commentators will wax fatuous, that people are tired of it all—tired of the anthems and the flags, tired of the invocations of "9/11," tired of a certain kitsch, civic and commercial, that has attached itself to the event. Fair enough. But to spend one's energies this week calibrating levels of rhetorical sophistication in public and private grief

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GUY BILLOUT

seems like time, and refinement, ill spent.

Grief is the most pervasive emotion of this commemoration, but it is not the only one. There are no names for everything we felt that day, felt for weeks and months after, and feel still—for the new sense of vulnerability and dread while crossing the Brooklyn Bridge or glancing up at the Chrysler Building, for the pride and defiance as we learned about the countless acts of heroism on September 11th and of kindness in the days after, for the childlike love at the mere sight of a fire engine. What name is there for the acrid smell of destruction that wafted into our bedrooms and unquieted our sleep? How to describe the aura of unity, powerful and not wholly fleeting, in the city?



This is a week of emotion, but not only emotion. September 11th has also, from the start, compelled sustained analysis of a series of questions that remain very far from resolved. One of the many things this crisis asks of us is that fierce debate coexist with grief. Those who attacked the United States last year were not merely avatars of fanatical intolerance; they were and are mortal enemies of the very idea of tolerance. To review the list of the thousands of the dead, to see their faces, to learn even a little of how they lived, is to view a microcosm of the United States and of the world. Their killers meant to destroy not only as many lives as possible but also a set of conditions—modernity, fluidity, personal liberty—that constitute an increasingly global aspiration. The challenge to an open society is how to deal with, and defeat, those who exploit its freedoms in violent pursuit of a closed, intolerant, and unfree society; the danger accompanying that challenge is that every step we ourselves take in the direction of unfreedom, however necessary it may be or seem to be, is a small triumph for the enemy. The challenge to America as a superpower—"hyperpower" is now the favored term in foreign-policy circles—is how to deploy not only our unparalleled military might but also our diplomatic and cultural influence so as to isolate and destroy the practitioners of global terrorism while at the same time drying up the political and social swamps that sustain them. The concomitant danger is that the "war on terrorism" becomes a crudely unfocussed war of civilizations, a war between Islam and the West, a crusade mirroring a jihad. That, too, would be a triumph for the enemy, and not a small one.

Such a historical moment demands leadership of exceptional suppleness, judgment, and persuasiveness. President Bush won respect for the combination of restraint and determination he displayed in the immediate aftermath of the attacks, when his Administration herded most of the governments of the world together into a rough alliance against terrorism. But the "moral clarity" for which conservative (and other) commentators have praised Bush has not been married to a strategic counterpart. The Administration's approach to what it calls, a little jarringly, "homeland defense" has entailed too much unnecessary secrecy, too many arbitrary detentions, and too many intrusions upon civil liberties. In post-Taliban Afghanistan, last winter's fervent promises of steadfast aid and attention are being carried out fitfully at best. And the bullyboy unilateralism that had marked the Administration's foreign policy before the attacks, and that seemed at first to have been washed away by the wave of global sympathy and coöperation that followed them, has returned in force. Many of our friends and allies, especially in Europe, have been needlessly alienated by the Administration's arrogance. One may safely disdain *bien pensant* op-eds in *Le Monde* or the *Guardian,* but not the legitimate contentions of entire democratic nations and their elected leaders.

Those who have been calling for a debate over war with Iraq have lately got their wish, and then some. It is a curious kind of debate. Almost everyone acknowledges the desirability of the principal war aim proposed by the Administration's spokesmen: "regime change" in Baghdad, the removal of Saddam Hussein's gangster government. The participants in the debate are not, or not primarily, Republicans on one side and Democrats on the other, or "hawks" and "doves" in any traditional sense. The "war party" consists of neoconservative intellectuals and senior civilian officials within the Administration. The "peace party" is led by retired generals and former high officials of the previous Bush Administration, and is thought to include both the current Secretary of State and, perhaps, the President's father. One side maintains that war is necessary because it is the only way to prevent Saddam Hussein from obtaining nuclear and biological "weapons of mass destruction" and then using them, either directly or, more likely, by supplying them to undeterrable terrorists. And it argues that the toppling of the Iraqi regime would precipitate a cascade of democratization throughout the Arab and Muslim world, beginning with Iran and Syria but eventually encompassing Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and a future Palestinian state as well. The other side argues that war, no matter how victorious in the first instance, could end by making the region and the world more dangerous than before. It would risk the collapse of the delicate but ongoing global system of anti-terror police work and information sharing; the overthrow of acceptable regimes in an arc stretching from Jordan to Pakistan, which already possesses a nuclear arsenal; the widening of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the enthronement of preëmption as a prerogative of power, not only in the Middle East but also in places like the Hindu Kush and the straits of Taiwan; and a long and expensive occupation of Iraq that diverts vast quantities of American resources, military and otherwise, into a nation-building enterprise that might succeed mainly in provoking, and providing targets for, new terrorism.

A blind and righteous pacifism was not an option after September 11th. If there is compelling evidence that Iraq is a singular threat—one far more immediate than, say, North Korea, which is known to have weapons of mass destruction at hand—and that it is implicated in the murderous activities of Al Qaeda, then the need to quash that threat will demand decisive force. This week, at the United Nations, the President is expected to begin making the case. To say that he has not yet done so, and to ask that it be persuasive both to the American people and to our putative confederates in this fight, is not to "go all wobbly," as Margaret Thatcher once put it. Neither is pointing out that it was a multi-varied structure of coöperation which, in the last century, led to the defeat of totalitarian fanaticism. American power, in all its military, intellectual, and economic forms, is, mostly to the world's benefit, undeniable. Ask Mullah Omar. But this Administration's frequent tendency to dismiss the better instincts of the world community—as in its contemptuous hostility to the Kyoto environmental accords and the nascent international system of justice for war crimes—is foolish. America's influence is too precious to be squandered in fits of narrow ideological pique.

For a war against Iraq to be undertaken by the United States alone, without the approval of the United Nations or, at least, of America's closest and staunchest friends in the democratic world, would multiply its perils. With or without that approval, however, such a war would be a thing of "terrible reality and earnestness." Nearly twelve years ago, Operation Desert Storm, the war of the father, began and ended. Though it cost some seventy billion dollars, we think of it as nearly bloodless, because fewer than three hundred Americans died. But tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers, the great majority of them conscripts, were killed. That war was a straightforward matter of driving back a concentrated army, in open desert terrain, from territory that was not its own. This one would be different. The uncertainties—not only the human and material costs (to us, to the Iraqis, to stability in the region and the rest of the world) but the ultimate geopolitical results—are immense. Antietam, at the dawn of modern warfare, was meant to settle a civil conflict, one that had followed decades of deliberation, debate, and negotiation. If there is a lesson for us, perhaps it's something like this: to reason why, to ask that the case be made before committing our blood to the battlefield, is not a failure of nerve. It's simple patriotism.

—*David Remnick & Hendrik Hertzberg*

STATE OF THE UNION

Tony's new home, a two-family brick house on Staten Island, is much smaller than the Queen Anne he and his wife, Donna, sold last fall so that he would no longer have to work a second job. A forty-year-old firefighter with Squad 1, in Park Slope, Tony has vowed to be a father to the twenty-seven children from the squad who were made fatherless on September 11th. Among those children is my son, Aidan, who is six. Aidan's father, my husband, Dave, was one of the twelve men from Squad 1 who died in the collapse of the World Trade Center.

On an unseasonably warm day last January, Tony and I were outside his house, loading up his truck for a trip to Washington for the President's State of the Union Message. Tony was wearing a cutoff T-shirt, shorts, and white sneakers. His arms are huge, but the guys at the firehouse call him "chicken legs," because his calf muscles are small. Dave told me once how the guys drew a mouth and two eyes on a potato, stuck it with a pair of toothpicks, and named it Tony.

"You got a map?" Tony asked me.

"No."

"What, do I gotta do everything around here?" he said.

"C'mon, get it together. You're my chauffeur."

Hillary Clinton's office had invited me to be her guest at the State of the Union address. We had met a week earlier, in Washington, when I witnessed President Bush signing the Victims of Terrorism Tax Relief Act. I was seated directly behind her, and was struck by how much prettier she appeared in person. She recognized me and shook my hand. We talked about Ground Zero, and about a photo of Dave that I wore pinned to my dark-blue suit.

"All right, I got it," Tony said. "I-95 south almost all the way."

A few hours later, we pulled up to the Hyatt Regency in Washington. The lobby was filled with graying men in dark suits. In the elevator, Tony, in his T-shirt and shorts, shifted uncomfortably as the men eyed him.

Tony and I went to our rooms. Mine had two double beds. I sat on one of them and tried to remember if I'd ever been in a hotel room alone. In the bathroom, I turned on the shower to steam out the wrinkles in my suit. Clearing the mirror with a sleeve, I was startled by how old I looked. Circles under my eyes, gray hair. I leaned in closer. Who was I kidding? I found a hair on my chin and pulled it out with a pair of tweezers, so hard that my eyes watered, and before I knew it I was crying.

Tony stood waiting for me in the lobby. He had changed into his Class A dress uniform. The men in suits stared at us differently now, some even nodding fraternally in Tony's direction.

"You look nice," I whispered.

"I hate this suit," he said. I could understand why. I had watched him at countless wakes and funerals, standing at attention, white gloves saluting until his arms began to shake.

At the Senate Office Building, we

were met by Clinton's assistant Matthew Nelson. "Hillary is just down this way," he said. He led us to a small room full of young people seated at computers. They all stood to greet us. Then Hillary entered, smiling stiffly in a brown suit, and we followed her back into her office, which was painted a gleaming yellow. I remarked that I had the same color in my kitchen. We talked about yellow curly hair, and about Chelsea. Hillary asked about Aidan, and what it had been like to be married to a firefighter. I told her how we had struggled financially, and she looked at Tony, who told her that he had always had to work a second job in order to support his kids. I had brought along the Debt of Honor bill, and I handed it to her now in a paper bag, chiding myself for not having something nicer in which to present it.

"This is a bill my organization, the 9-11 Widows' and Victims' Family Association, is backing," I said. "It is a New York State sales tax introduced by Assemblyman Tom Kirwan. It is only fifty cents on a hundred dollars, and it would give every police officer and firefighter an extra fifteen thousand dollars a year."

Hillary nodded politely, promised to have a look at the bill, and handed the bag to Matthew. I imagined it stuck in a "to do" pile as large as mine, never to be read. We took photos and laughed at the awkwardness of it all. She looked tired and seemed grateful when Matthew told us that it was time to go.

Downstairs, we were led to an open tram, the monorail that runs under the Senate buildings to the Capitol. Senator Clinton sat in the front seat of the train, and I sat beside her. Tony went to sit in the next car, but she insisted that he join us in the front. Tony plopped down, wedging me up against the Senator.

"Sorry about my bottom," I said.

"You should be," Tony joked.

"You're no fashion model yourself," I said.

"Neither am I," Hillary said.

At the Capitol, we were stopped by security people, who asked for our invitations. I told the Senator that Tony didn't have one. She smiled at the guard, and he let Tony through.

"Marian, I'm going to have dinner with a few of the senators before we start," Hillary said, at the next checkpoint. "I'm so glad you came. I hope you enjoy yourself tonight." She shook my hand and kissed me on the cheek. Then she turned to Tony and put her hand on his shoulder. "I'm so sorry," she said. "I tried to get you in tonight, but every senator is allowed only one guest."

"Don't worry about it," Tony said. "I'm just her chauffeur." Moments later, though, Tony ran into a friend, a former New York City fire captain who was working security at the Capitol. "You got any juice up here?" Tony asked him.

"Yeah, I can get you in," the friend said.

My seat was against a wall, adjacent to the press box, in a narrow balcony. Hillary Clinton entered the hall, looked up, and waved to me. I waved back. Not long afterward, President Bush entered, and soon we were standing to applaud so often that my thighs began to burn. I could see the President's black shoe, behind the podium, scratching the back of his other leg. Exhausted, I decided to sit out the last few rounds of applause, and people in the balcony flashed me dirty looks. I spotted Tony, sitting in the balcony across from me, behind Laura Bush and the interim leader of Afghanistan, and next to a large older woman who kept talking to him throughout the speech.

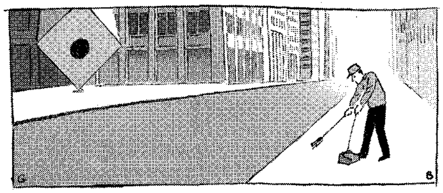
When the President had finished, Tony found me and we followed the crowd out into the warm night. "Did you see that lady talking to me?" Tony said. "She was counting every time we stood up—thirty-eight, thirty-nine. She was married to some senator. He died a couple of years ago. I told her about you."

A police motorcade sped past, trailed by a column of black limousines. "What did she say?" I asked.

"She said to cry in the shower so your face doesn't swell."

It is the widows' secret. The warm water washes over us and bids us to join in the flow with our tears. "Let's go," I said. "I need some food and a shower."

—*Marian Fontana*



TRAVELLING

The images that continually roll in my mind are of the four of us in Italy, in March of 2001. Charlotte, four months old, is strapped to my chest. Margaret, three years old, rides on Jeff's back, patting his shoulder. We are walking across the Ponte Vecchio, strolling the ramparts of Lucca at dusk, hiking through a dusting of snow in the Garfagnana mountains. Always, we are holding hands.

My husband, Jeffrey R. Smith, worked on the hundred and fourth floor of Two World Trade for the investment-banking firm Sandler O'Neill. He went to work on September 11th and never came home. We had been married for four and a half years.

Of the many things I miss about Jeff, the memories of travelling together seem to hurt me most. We had an adventurous and romantic marriage, and our children did not slow us down—we simply carried them on our backs. The girls' passport photographs were taken when each of them was two months old. Jeff's hand is in the photos, because he is holding the girls up for the camera.

This summer, the last of the seasons before I had to mark a year without him, was especially hard—hearing about other people's vacations and trips, not planning any of our own. In years past, Jeff and I used to stay up late on summer nights, scouring maps and books for places to go. Half the pleasure was in the planning. Now I don't even look at the Travel section of the *Times*. Sometimes I feel as if the girls and I are merely marking time.

Jeff and I met while scuba diving in the Turks and Caicos, in 1992. Several years later, we met up again and went on a trip to Bonaire. On our honeymoon, we lived aboard a dive boat in the Coral Sea, off the Great Barrier Reef. Memories are best when they are shared, and better when they are bolstered and even argued over. Husbands and wives get to do that; widows do not.

Our daughters are now almost four and two. I don't hesitate to talk about their father with them. Margaret loves to remember getting stuck in the dome of the Duomo, in Florence; the backpack she was in was too wide for the narrow passage we were navigating, high above the nave. Charlotte's memories need to be created; she was only ten months old when Jeff was killed. I have taught her to identify her father in our family pictures. Margaret helps her: "This is Daddy, Charlotte, in the red shirt."

I tell the girls that everything Daddy and I were going to do with them Mommy will do. Jeff and I had planned to put Margaret on skis last winter, so in March I drove to Vermont with the girls. Friends who live there came to stay with us in our condo, arriving with bags of groceries. The first morning, I put Charlotte in day care, and Margaret in ski school, and then my friends and I rode the chairlift to the top of the mountain. It was raining, and the snow had turned to ice. On my first run, I instinctively looked for Jeff's blue jacket ahead of me on the trail. Later, on the bunny hill, I positioned Margaret between my legs and we lurched forward, our skis scraping the ice. I had intended to film this moment, with Jeff hunched over Margaret, urging her on. I could almost hear Jeff's laughter, as Margaret yelled, "Faster, Mom! Faster!"

I want our old life back. Still, I am slowly awakening, becoming the woman I was, the woman Jeff loved. He'd be proud of the work I've done with the girls, and that makes me miss him even more. It's a new level of grief—a new place I have travelled to, wretchedly, without my husband by my side.

—*Ellen S. Bakalian*

STRENGTH AND LUCK

I am living with my fourteen-month-old daughter, Emerson, in a house on the shore of Greenwood Lake, in New Jersey. Three years ago, when my husband, Jeremy, and I decided to have a baby and move out of the city, we had two requirements for our new house: it had to have a fireplace and a porch. In the winter, when the lake froze over, we could hear the ice cracking late at night.

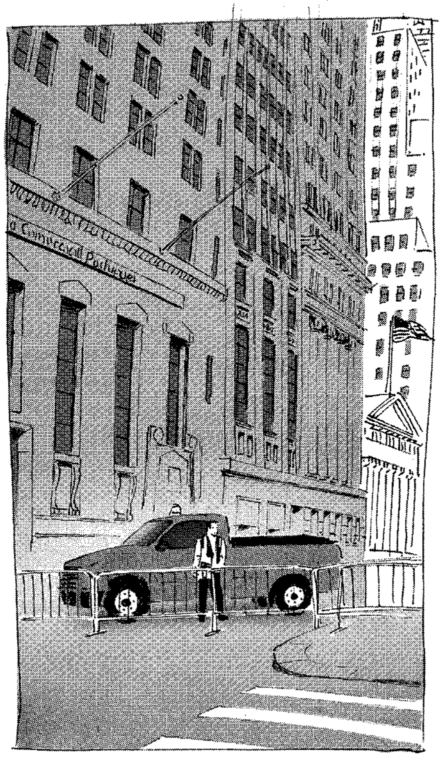
Jeremy was on the plane that crashed in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, on September 11th. In his last phone call to me, at 9:37 A.M.—I now put numbered time on everything this way—when he told me about the "three bad men wearing red headbands," and about how he and some of the other passengers were going to try to "do something," he sounded calm and focussed, but very sad. He wasn't the type of person to be sad. We kept saying to each other, "I love you," "I love you," "I love you." He said, "I need you to be happy." He said he knew that I would try to give Emmy everything we had dreamed of.

Jeremy and I met in ninth-grade biology class, at the Saddle River Day School, in New Jersey. He remembered that I was wearing a Laura Ashley blue floral-pattern dress. He had an enormous Afro. We were king and queen at our high-school prom, in 1988. We were married, in 1996, in a little stone church, All Souls, in the Catskills, in a nondenominational service. I had a couple of miscarriages before Emmy, until it was discovered that I had antiphospholipid antibodies, a condition that causes blood clotting. I needed shots of Lovenox in my stomach twice a day. Jeremy gave them to me. By the time I was pregnant with Emmy, he was travelling a lot for work, and occasionally I was left alone for a few days, so I had to learn to give myself the shots. I practiced on oranges. Emerson Ferris Glick was born a month early, and weighed four pounds nine ounces. Jeremy told me that in Old English the word "Emerson" means "strength," and that in Yiddish "Glick" means "luck."

Jeremy's parents live half an hour away. Jeremy is the third of six children, all of whom have names that begin with the letter "J": Jennifer, Jonah, Jeremy, Jared, Jed, and Joanna. Jed is twenty-four. He eats a sandwich just like Jeremy, with huge bites. When I see Jed eating a sandwich, I start to cry. But I can't look away, because I want to remember.

Once a week, I meet with a counsellor and fifteen other women, most of them my age, from Bergen and Passaic Counties. Most of their husbands worked for Cantor Fitzgerald or another company like it, on the highest floors, above where the planes hit. It's the best kind of support I could have. I like learning that somebody else still hasn't cleaned out her husband's closet. We share information with one another, too—for example, what did you hear from the coroner? And we share strength. It's good to be able to offer support, and not just take it.

On the Sunday after the eleventh, we had a memorial service for Jeremy on Windham Mountain. We put up a big tent at the foot of the slope. Two thousand people came. I was out of my mind with grief. A rabbi spoke. A minister spoke. I spoke. I don't remember a word I said. People told stories about Jeremy that I had never heard before. But after a while I had to leave. I got into Jeremy's pickup truck and drove in no particular direction. Before long, I found myself at the old stone church where we got married. It was dark inside, and cool. I stayed there for two and a half hours. I talked to Jeremy, recounting our life together, telling him some of the things I'd heard, and thanking him. Then I went home and got into bed.



A friend of mine told me that someone who has been given purest love will keep it in her all her life. She said that Emmy will keep in her the feeling of Jeremy's touch. "It's not just memory," my friend said. "It's something that always stays."

When I was invited to visit the crash site in Pennsylvania, I considered not going. United Airlines sent three cars for my family and me. There was nothing to see. I couldn't bear to stay for more than a few minutes. All I felt was "I want to talk to Jeremy." Now I feel as if I could get through anything.

—*Lyzbeth Glick*

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

THE WAR ON WHAT?

The White House and the debate about whom to fight next.

BY NICHOLAS LEMANN

Just a few hours after the terrorist attacks of September 11th, President Bush made a brief appearance at Barksdale Air Force Base, in Louisiana. "Make no mistake," he said, "the United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts." It was a clear, specific reaction to the attacks. Nine days later, when Bush came to the Capitol to give his first full speech about the attacks, before a joint session of Congress, he identified Al Qaeda as their perpetrator and laid out a detailed course of action: the United States would go after Al Qaeda all over the world; Al Qaeda's chief governmental protector, the Taliban, would have to coöperate fully, or it would be removed from power in Afghanistan. Then he added two memorable, but less specific, sentences: "Our war on terror begins with Al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated."

The difference between retaliating against Al Qaeda and declaring war on terror is the difference between a response and a doctrine. Beginning with that first speech, Bush has steadily upped the doctrinal ante. The next time Bush addressed a joint session of Congress—when he delivered his State of the Union Message, in January—he said, "Our nation will continue to be steadfast and patient and persistent in the pursuit of two great objectives. First, we will shut down terrorist camps, disrupt terrorist plans, and bring terrorists to justice. And, second, we must prevent the terrorists and regimes who seek chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons from threatening the United States and the world." So now there was a second doctrine: Bush was broadening the United States' understanding of being at war, extending it from international terrorist organizations to governments that were not necessarily connected to Al Qaeda or involved in the September 11th attacks. In three less noticed speeches, at military universities—The Citadel, last December; Virginia Military Institute, in April; and West Point, in June—Bush has made it clear that the United States intends to remove from power more governments than just Afghanistan's. In the West Point speech, the most significant of the three, he said that the "Cold War doctrines of deterrence and containment" are no longer sufficient for the United States, and that from now on "we must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge"—in other words, wage war on other states preventively.

All these formulations are important, but "war on terror" is the one that has caught on. It isn't just Bush who uses it constantly; the press and his Democratic opposition do, too. The phrase meets the basic test of Presidential rhetoric: it has entered the language so fully, and framed the way people think about how the United States is reacting to the September 11th attacks so completely, that the idea that declaring and waging war on terror was not the sole, inevitable, logical consequence of the attacks just isn't in circulation.

During the drafting of Bush's first speech, there was debate even within the Administration about the use of the word "war" (although since practically the first thing Bush said on hearing that a second plane had flown into the World Trade Center was "We're at war," it was probably beside the point). Presidents have been declaring metaphoric war on non-traditional enemies—that is, not sovereign states or alliances—at least since Lyndon Johnson declared war on poverty, in 1964. Doing so has clear advantages. It promises the public a dramatic effort to solve a terrible problem, while implicitly asking in return for the kind of support that politicians get

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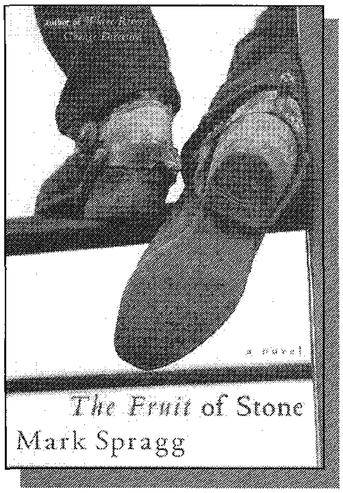

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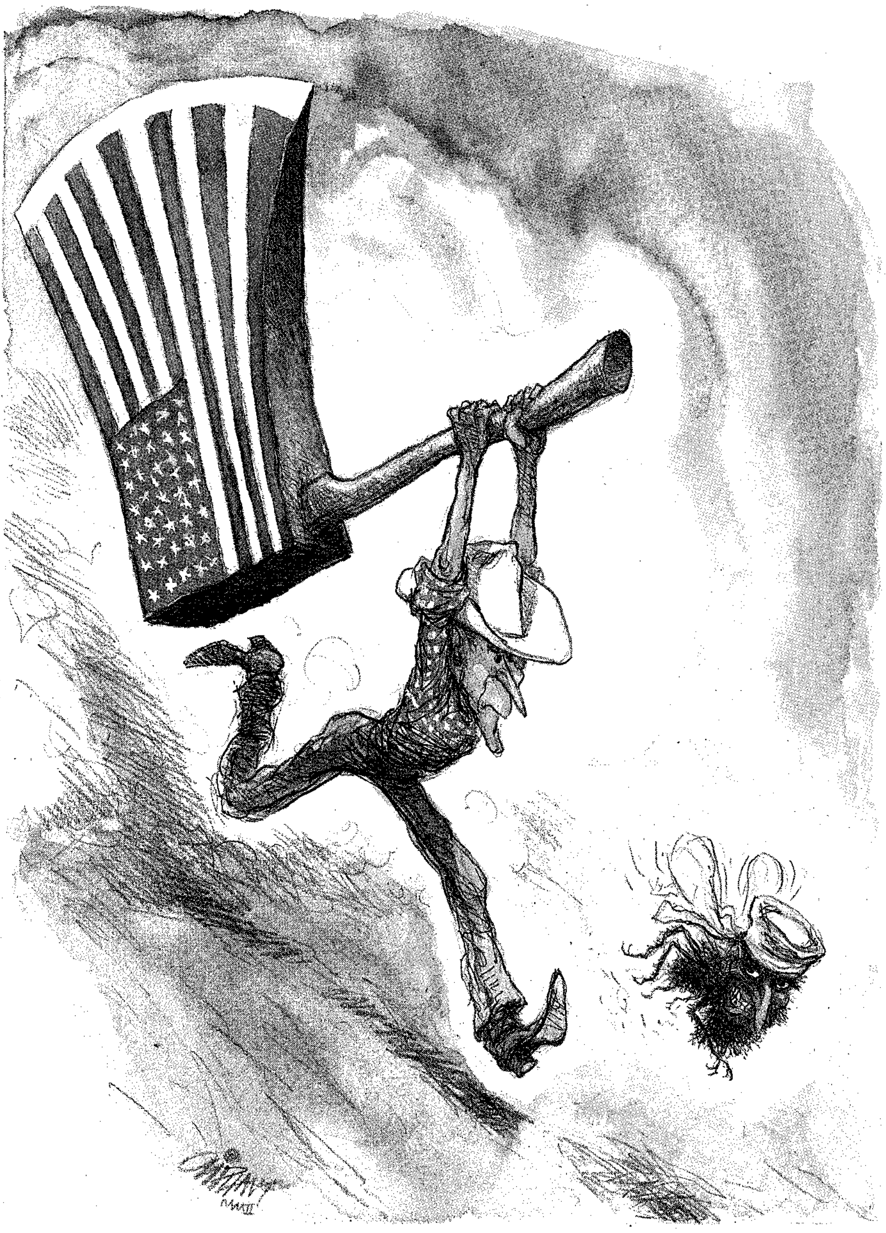
only in extraordinary circumstances. But there are disadvantages, too. Traditional wars are fought by military means and have definite endings. Metaphoric wars don't. Terror, like poverty and inflation and drugs, will never sit at a desk and sign an unconditional surrender in front of television cameras. The public can tire of a war that lasts for years. The war metaphor can become a trap: a single successful terrorist attack on the United States, even a relatively minor one, would surely open up a discourse about having "lost" the war on terror. The Administration is aware of these difficulties—that's why Bush declared war on terror with caveats about the war's not being likely to have a neat conclusion and requiring great patience on the public's part, and why other officials, especially Attorney General John Ashcroft, have talked about future attacks as a virtual certainty. Still, over the past year the Administration has succeeded in convincing the country that it is notionally at war.



Some analysts believe Bush should have declared war on Al Qaeda—not on "terror."

PAT OLIPHANT

Although Bush qualified his initial declaration of war on terrorists with the phrase "of global reach," he was still, in effect, promising to wipe out not just Al Qaeda but every other jihad organization that operates across national borders. He was also inviting countries to ask—as Israel, Russia, India, and others have done—for more American help in their own struggles against violent political opposition that, because it attacks civilians, qualifies as terrorism. The commitment is enormous.

The second most resonant passage in that first Bush speech—"Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists"—represents another daunting undertaking by the United States, because fitting "every nation, in every region" into the Procrustean bed of being "with us" and against "the terrorists" is more complicated than Bush made it sound. The most obvious example of a nation that sided with us against the terrorists, Pakistan, quite clearly continues to violate Bush's injunction that "from this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime," since Pakistan is the home base of terrorists who operate in Kashmir. The reason Pakistan's President, Pervez Musharraf, doesn't adhere more strictly to the Bush doctrine is that if he did he'd be overthrown by Islamists, and then Pakistan would be much less "with us" than it is now. In recent months, Bush and other members of the Administration have begun talking about supporting democracy in the Middle East, and Musharraf, who took office in a coup and has altered Pakistan's constitution so as to make its elections as minimally significant as possible, is a reminder that, in many places, American policy is an imperfect fit with the situation on the ground. The standard that Bush has proposed for preventive military action against threatening regimes, if carried out literally, would represent yet another huge project, since perhaps a dozen governments that are not formal, reliable allies of the United States have some chemical- or biological-weapons capability. If one takes the President at his word, the United States has assumed, under the rubric of the war on terror, a new set of foreign-policy commitments that are much more ambitious, complicated, and difficult to realize than Bush's successful catchphrase would indicate.

For months after September 11th, there was no real debate about the war on terror. That's understandable—we've begun to forget how profoundly the terrorists terrorized us and how necessary cohesion felt after an attack

SWANN
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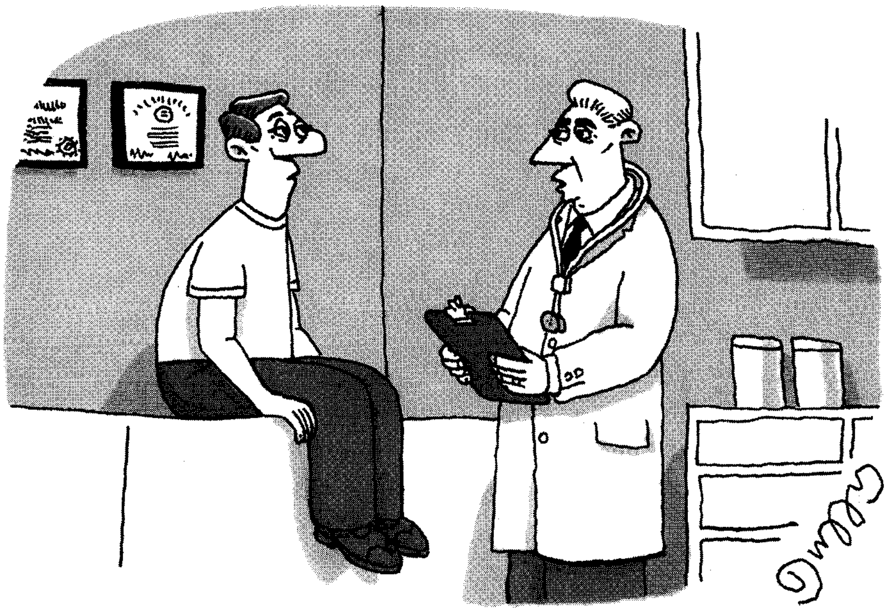
that was beyond the imaginings not just of ordinary citizens but of even the leading experts on terrorism. What little dissent there was in those early days seemed as if it must have been ordered up by a covert wartime National Recovery Administration that had become concerned about the problem of underemployment among patriotic political commentators. Then, after the first of the year, leading Democrats—and only leading Democrats; the position of most Democratic congressional candidates today is one of unwavering support for the President—began to voice a carefully delimited critique of Bush's conduct of the war, and to propose a different way of conducting it. The critique varies from person to person, but it would be fair to call the vision underlying it something like "war on terror: the enhanced edition."

In a speech at the Council on Foreign Relations, in New York, in February, Al Gore said that he no longer felt constrained, as he had in the fall and early winter, from criticizing Bush's conduct of the war. But he specifically endorsed the two main ideas Bush had put forth at that point: war on terror and American opposition to rogue regimes. His criticism was that Bush wasn't doing more to pursue these goals through liberal means like foreign aid and diplomacy.

Most of the other Democrats at the possible Presidential-candidate level have since given foreign-policy speeches touching on some of the same themes. They have said, variously, that Bush was acting unilaterally, was undercommitted to the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan, wasn't adequately funding non-fundamentalist education efforts in the Middle East, wasn't adding enough new intelligence capability, and wasn't upgrading the Office of Homeland Security to the status of a Cabinet department (Bush has since adopted the Democratic position on that issue). Words like "commitment," "engagement," "involvement," and "coöperation" came up a lot in these speeches. Bill Clinton made a foreign-policy appearance in June, also under the auspices of the Council on Foreign Relations, at which he got closer to a workable slogan than the others had: he said that he supported a strategy of "more partners and fewer terrorists" (or, alternatively, "fewer enemies and more friends"), featuring worldwide health-and-education aid, foreign-debt relief, and more international peacekeeping efforts. Senator John Kerry, of Massachusetts, who has the best military combat credentials among the Democrats who are thinking about running for President, opened a second front at the beginning of the summer, by criticizing Bush as a Commander-in-Chief, especially for permitting the escape of top Al Qaeda leaders, including possibly Osama bin Laden, by relying on Afghan soldiers as proxy



"I'm afraid it's your body, Mr. Haskins."

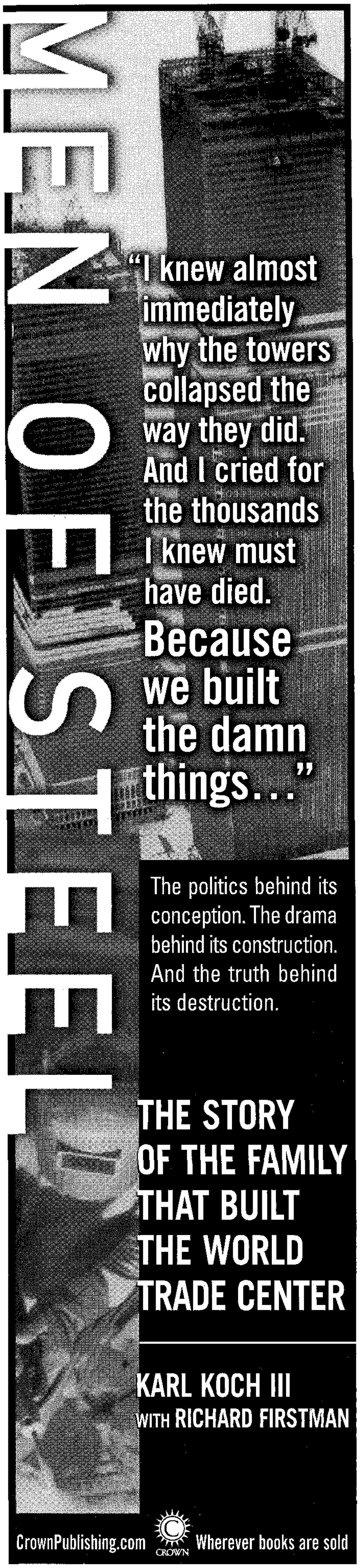
ground forces in the Battle of Tora Bora, in December.

Kerry's position was consistent with that of the other Democrats: they all want more of the war on terror, not less; in Kerry's case, more American troops on the ground in Afghanistan. Most of the leading figures in Washington, it seems, are avid participants in what might be called the Kennan Games: the winner will be the person who has most successfully used September 11th as the basis for a new American grand strategy as durable and memorable as the one George Kennan proposed in 1946—containment of the Soviet bloc. The Democrats do disagree internally about Bush's idea of the United States' replacing regimes, particularly Iraq. But they agree about declaring war on terror and about using September 11th as the occasion to try to extend America's overwhelming power even further. One Administration foreign-policy official told me, a little smugly but not without justice, that the foreign-policy debate inside the Bush Administration is a lot more interesting and impassioned than the debate outside it.

The official was talking about the struggle between the Administration's hawks and moderates—a struggle that the press usually describes as an argument between Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense (the hawk), and Colin Powell, the Secretary of State (the moderate). The description is accurate as far as it goes, but the hawks, who believe that the United States should remain the world's sole great power for many decades and that force, rather than international coöperation, is the best means to that end, are nested in places other than the Pentagon. Vice-President Cheney is a hawk who spends much more time with Bush than Rumsfeld does, and there are important hawks who are one or two levels down on Cheney's staff, on the National Security Council staff, and even at the State Department (chiefly John R. Bolton, the Under-Secretary for Arms Control and International Security), as well as at Defense.

One reason the hawks are so interesting is that they seem to break all the rules and get away with it. The foreign-policy world prides itself on maintaining a bipartisan consensus, so being outside the consensus should, theoretically, rob you of influence. But the hawks have defied the consensus for thirty years, ever since they turned against détente with the Soviet Union during the Nixon Administration, and today they have more influence than ever. President Bush is supposed to insist on absolute personal loyalty and on keeping all debate strictly internal, but the hawks plainly have goals other than just Bush's reëlection; they announce or leak positions in advance of Bush (Paul Wolfowitz, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, declared less than a week after September 11th that the United States would be "ending states who sponsor terrorism"), and their circle includes people who misbehaved during the 2000 campaign, like William Kristol, the editor of the *Weekly Standard*, who was a John McCain supporter. Washington's attitude toward the hawks seems to be official disapproval tinged with sneaking admiration. They have an incaution that usually makes holding office impossible, and yet they have gained high-ranking jobs and kept them. Their operational persistence and their intellectual boldness give them disproportionate influence—the origins of just about all of Bush's doctrinal statements over the last year clearly can be traced to the hawks.

A good place to find the mainstream Democratic counter-argument to the hawks is a book published in March called "The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone," by Joseph S. Nye, Jr., the dean of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and someone who might well have turned up in a high-ranking foreign-policy job in a Gore Administration. Nye acknowledges that the United States is supremely powerful right now, but he says that it is a temporary condition to be taken advantage of, and not something that can become permanent. We should pursue "soft power," a complex web of alliances and aid agreements that bind the rest of the world to our interests and give us a more benign reputation abroad. Another person who would almost certainly be shaping American foreign policy in a Gore Administra-



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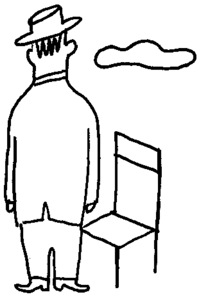
tion, Richard Holbrooke, the former United Nations Ambassador, argued, when I spoke with him recently, that the hawks around Bush fundamentally misunderstand the role being played by the international organizations that the United States helped create after the Second World War. "The entire system was created by statesmen like Roosevelt, Truman, and Acheson to bind other countries to our interests—to prevent rogue states," Holbrooke said. "True, some international organizations got taken over, like UNESCO. But on the whole the international system was much more favorable to us than to others. Remember that Bush's father was Ambassador to the U.N. He understands this."

During the Clinton Administration, Joseph Nye was an Assistant Secretary of Defense. After he returned to Harvard, he became a member, along with hawks like Wolfowitz and Richard Perle, of an advisory group called the Defense Policy Board, whose members are briefed periodically at the Pentagon. When the Bush Administration came into office, Perle was made the board's chairman, Nye and other Democratic members were not reappointed, and the board became Hawk Central. I went to see Nye not long ago, and he said, "There's more difference between the traditionalists and the hawks in the Administration than between the traditionalists and the Democrats, especially on the question of to what extent we should pay attention to the views of others."

The contrast between the Democrats' faith in international treaties and organizations and the hawks' mistrust of them couldn't be more deep-seated; it reflects fundamentally different views of human nature. Do you get people to behave the way you'd like them to through power and force, or by encouragement and friendship? The hawks would say, Clearly the former, especially in the Arab world. They see the tough, threatening messages that Bush has been sending to other governments, through his rhetoric and through his refusal to participate in international organizations, as having already paid off in the form of increased influence for the United States. A lot of the conversation in foreign-policy circles is about articles in small-circulation periodicals. The article that prompted the most buzz this summer was an essay in *Policy Review*, a conservative publication affiliated with the Hoover Institution, called "Power and Weakness," by Robert Kagan, another prominent hawk. Kagan is currently enduring one of the cruellest fates that can be visited on one of his kind: because of his wife's job, he lives in Brussels, in the bosom of the "international community." Kagan says, with good-humored condescension, that of course the Europeans believe in international law and multilateralism. Who can blame them? Weak nations, lacking the resources and the will to maintain military power, always have.

To the extent that the supremely confident hawks take seriously anyone who disagrees with them, it wouldn't be the multilateralists, whom they regard as sentimental and naïve, but old-fashioned foreign-policy realists, people who think of themselves as being hardheaded enough to conduct their discussion of American foreign policy on the ground of practical matters like national interest and balance of power. Moral campaigns to remake the world don't cut it with the realists. To them it's the hawks who are sentimental and naïve, and also dangerously incautious, because they overestimate the extent to which the United States can impose its will abroad without suffering unforeseen consequences. For the past year, the realists have been the dog that hasn't barked. (There is a left-wing argument against the war on terror, which proceeds from a suspicion of American power; it counts as a loudly barking dog because commentators who object to it have given it so much publicity.) The realists are practically reverential toward American power, but, unlike just about everybody in Washington—Administration hawks and moderates, Democrats and Republicans in Congress—they don't think there should be a war on terror.



Over the summer, foreign-policy elder statesmen like Brent Scowcroft, James Baker, and Zbigniew Brzezinski got a lot of attention for publicly expressing realist doubts about the prospective American invasion of Iraq, and Vice-President Cheney responded with a speech making the case for war, but the broader realist argument about the war on terror has been absent from the national discussion. I went to see some of the leading realists recently, with the idea of giving their opinions a public airing. The people I interviewed are well-known figures in international relations, professors at major universities—John Mearsheimer, of the University of Chicago; Stephen Van Evera and Barry Posen, of M.I.T.; and Stephen Walt, of Harvard—but they reported that they haven't been seriously in touch with anybody in government over the past year. Evidently, their point of view isn't being considered in Washington.

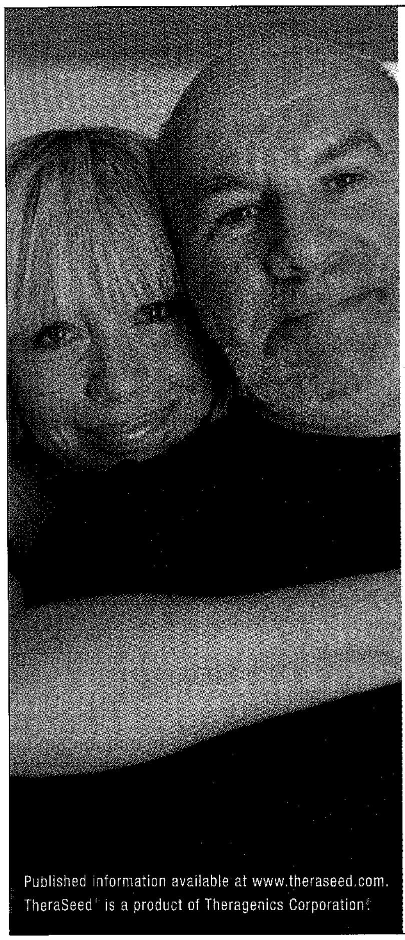
The consensus among the realists is that the United States should have declared war on Al Qaeda, not on terrorism. If it had, then all foreign-policy projects would be evaluated on the basis of how well they served the worldwide struggle against Al Qaeda. The realists are minimalists. They often say things like "do less" and "reduce the American footprint." Using the September 11th attacks as the occasion to remake America's role in the world is exactly what they don't want. They revere tough-minded diplomacy and suspect military adventurism—another of their favorite formulations is that it's better to display the velvet glove than the mailed fist. In the nineteen-nineties, they opposed United States military involvement in the Balkans, and today they oppose the idea of invading Iraq and of seeking "regime change" in other countries. The hawks believe that anti-Americanism springs from pure irrational hatred and can best be dealt with through shows of force; the realists believe anti-Americanism varies with the extent of visible, bellicose American behavior, and that is why they want to reduce the footprint.

"I think the Al Qaeda threat is *very* serious," Stephen Van Evera told me. We were a long, long way from the corridors of power—sitting on a park bench in Lexington, Massachusetts. "We used to believe there was no such thing as Al Qaeda"—a terrorist organization capable of inflicting mass casualties. "They're very skillful. They combine high patience and training capacity and motivation. I was very shocked by 9/11. We're in a struggle to the death with these people. They'd bring in nuclear weapons here, if they could. I think this could be the highest threat to our national security ever: a non-deterrable enemy that may acquire weapons of mass destruction."

He went on, "Defining it as a broad war on terror was a tremendous mistake. It should have been a war on Al Qaeda. Don't take your eye off the ball. Subordinate every other policy to it, including the policies toward Russia, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and Iraq. Instead, the Administration defined it as a broad war on terror, including groups that have never taken a swing at the United States and never will. It leads to a loss of focus. Al Qaeda escapes through the cracks. And you make enemies of the people you need against Al Qaeda. There are large risks in a war against Iraq. There could be a lengthy, televised public slaughter of Muslims by Americans. A wide imperial rampage through the Middle East—what do you do after you win? We're not out of Bosnia and Kosovo yet, and Iraq is much bigger. It's a huge occupation and reconstruction. We aren't good at this."

The realists agreed wholeheartedly with the Administration's decision to use American military forces to remove the Taliban government in Afghanistan from power, because the Taliban was harboring Al Qaeda, our attacker. And they agreed that the campaign against the Taliban was a big success. But they were not particularly sanguine about American progress against Al Qaeda in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban. "When I put together the evidence, it's not going very well," Van Evera said. "We've nailed eight of the top twenty-five Al Qaeda leaders. We need to roll up the entire leadership. They're still capable of launching attacks. They've attempted about a dozen since 9/11."

Barry Posen, Van Evera's colleague at M.I.T., who specializes in military



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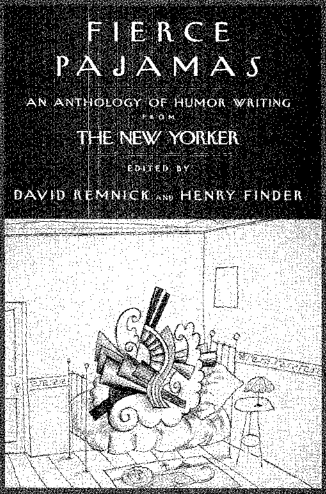

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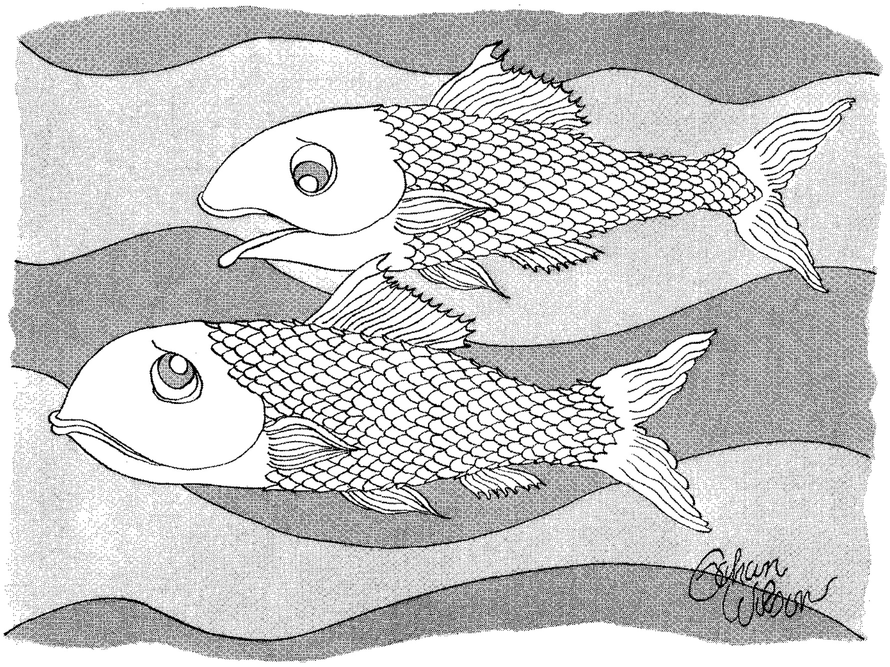

"You've got your scales on backward."

• •

analysis, maintained that the mop-up campaign in Afghanistan had been severely hampered by American unwillingness to use ground forces, because of fear of casualties and because current American military doctrine overstresses the benefits of air power. "It looks like we missed a number of opportunities," he said, "and the reason was that we didn't want to take risks. Tora Bora was a disaster, universally acknowledged as such, and never explained. The idea that casualty aversion could play a role here—it's extraordinary. If that's true, something's really wrong. The American people would have paid *hundreds* of dead to get the Al Qaeda leaders. Or it was pure incompetence—using drones and a bunch of mercenaries and bombs in a cordon operation. We couldn't have done a worse job. We should have put in every Ranger in range. There's no excuse. This is very weird. Then they have this second chance, Operation Anaconda"—the American effort to encircle Al Qaeda and Taliban forces in the Shah-e-Kot Valley, in eastern Afghanistan, last March. "My sense is, it was the toughest of the Al Qaeda hard cases, very good and gutsy. The commander"—Major General Franklin Hagenbeck—"didn't know what he was doing. He didn't send enough forces. He didn't take enough artillery. And there was too much reliance on the Afghans. And, it's clear, they were kerfuffled afterward. They went to the Brits for more troops"—England flew in seventeen hundred marines as reinforcements—"and the commander was relieved," by Lieutenant General Dan McNeill. "They knew something was wrong. Opportunity No. 2 was missed. My guess is, most of them got away. So this is disturbing—a war on terror that doesn't focus on the terrorists."

From now on, the realists say, the pursuit of Al Qaeda will be an intelligence and police operation, not a military one: the big problem isn't that of physically conquering the dozens of cells from which terrorist operations are launched; it's locating them. The continuing use of American military power—especially on not strictly related projects, like invading Iraq—will do more harm than good, by alienating governments whose coöperation America will need in eliminating Al Qaeda cells on their soil, and by creating the kind of instability in the region that has in the past provided Al Qaeda with its best opportunities to establish bases of operations. "Military power is not necessary to wiping out Al Qaeda," Stephen

Walt said. "It's a crude instrument, and it almost always has effects you can't anticipate. We're seeing that now. We didn't get Mullah Omar and Osama bin Laden. We're killing civilians. We're killing friendly forces. This is ultimately a battle for the hearts and minds of people around the world. When your village just got levelled by an American mistake, the conclusions you draw will be rather different from what we'd want them to be."

He went on, "Americans do not yet perceive a cost to having a freewheeling foreign policy. We stayed in the Persian Gulf for ten years, and lost fewer than three hundred people. We knocked off the Taliban in a few weeks. But imagine going into Iraq. If things go badly, we end up there for a long time. There's a point where the costs start adding up. It will generate higher and higher levels of resentment. Empires start generating a lot of resentment. I'd leave Saddam right where he is. Keep him bottled up. Wait for him to die. What do we do if we're successful? How many coups were there in Iraq between 1958 and 1968? It's a country riven with internal divisions. That's why the Bush people didn't go to Baghdad in 1991. Iran is much more powerful and important than Iraq—how do Iranians react? I have limited confidence in our ability to run countries we don't understand. Why, in the middle of pursuing Al Qaeda, would you decide, 'Oh, let's take a big country and invade it and create a giant political mess there!' We've seen people attempting this in the Middle East before, and it hasn't worked. You never know how these operations will go. History is not on the side of the advocates here."

Al Qaeda was obviously helped by Afghanistan's descent into warlordism following the withdrawal of Soviet forces (and of American support for the opposition to them), in 1989. After September 11th, "failed states" looked like a pressing threat to American national security, because they provide terrorists with territory. The realists would therefore put far above the threat to the United States posed by Saddam Hussein's weapons programs the threat posed by instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan—countries whose pro-American Presidents, Hamid Karzai and Pervez Musharraf, respectively, are behaving like men who believe that their lives are increasingly in danger, and whose remote areas provide haven for Al Qaeda members. Saddam may be trying to develop nuclear weapons, but Pakistan has nuclear weapons already, and its military and intelligence services are full of Al Qaeda sympathizers. "We may lose Pakistan," John Mearsheimer told me, "and that would be a huge blow, because Al Qaeda would be able to operate in Pakistan, and it could get its hands on nuclear weapons. It's clear that Musharraf is in a precarious position. In Afghanistan, Karzai is in much less control than Musharraf. Pakistan is a coherent state. Afghanistan is not. There's no Army, it's run by warlords. It's almost impossible to maintain order." To the realists, the precariousness of the region is another reason not to invade Iraq: quite often, when war comes to one country it destabilizes the governments of neighboring countries. (The Administration recently announced that Al Qaeda is now also operating across Iraq's eastern border, in Iran.) And if, after an invasion of Iraq, some parts of that country are no longer controlled by Saddam Hussein but are not controlled by the United States either, Al Qaeda would have another place where it could establish itself.

The realists, along with many other foreign-policy experts who aren't necessarily in their camp on all issues, are also worried that Al Qaeda might get its hands on fissile material, or even nuclear weapons, that may be available in the southeastern regions of the old Soviet empire. In 1991, two of the United States Senate's foreign-policy eminences—Sam Nunn, of Georgia, and Richard Lugar, of Indiana—wrote and passed legislation that provided American funding for the safe storage and destruction of the old Soviet nuclear weapons in Russia and three former Soviet republics. Last December, Nunn (now an ex-senator) and Lugar went to the White House to pitch the idea of extending the program, in light of the threat from Al Qaeda, to other countries in the region. The officials they met with, a high-level group including Condoleezza Rice, the national-security adviser, and Vice-President Cheney, who participated by videoconference from the secure location where he spent much

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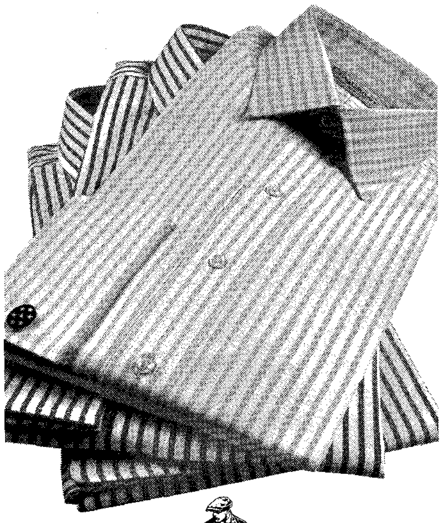

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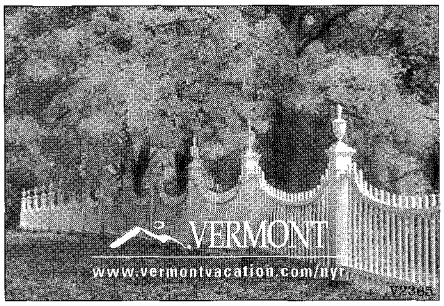

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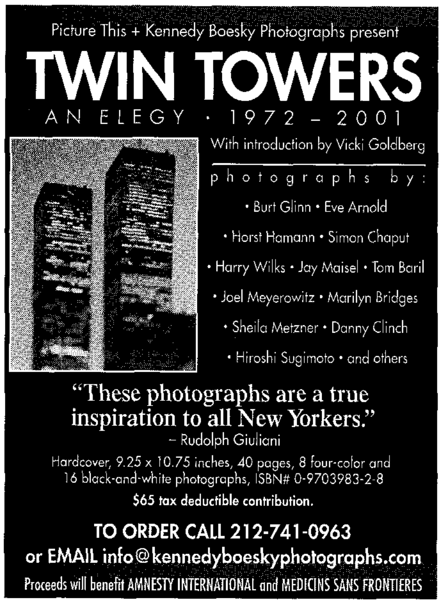
of the fall, seemed interested. But the Administration wound up adopting only a small version of the idea, and in the spring it suspended funding for the Nunn-Lugar program. This was taken to be another sign of the influence of the hawks and of their suspicion of international agreements, especially in the area of arms reduction.

The realists all noted that thus far in the war on terror President Bush's speeches have been bold but his actions have been cautious. While steadily laying out a case for something close to a world war, he has stationed fewer than ten thousand American troops in Afghanistan (many fewer than President Clinton stationed in the Balkans) and has deployed them sparingly in combat. He did not achieve the one policy change that would probably be most helpful in promoting American interests in Pakistan—a substantial lifting of the barriers on imports of Pakistani textiles, which would have made the United States look like the midwife of prosperity there—because of opposition from domestic textile manufacturers. He has not yet succeeded in creating a Department of Homeland Security. He has not imposed on the public the usual wartime tax increases and military call-ups.

Bush is a prudent politician. As governor of Texas, he almost always chose adept compromise over confrontation, even though he had been elected and reëlected with healthy majorities. He is certainly aware that (if you judge by election results, not polls) he has been much less popular as a national politician than as a local one—that's why he spends so much time visiting states that were close in the 2000 election, and offering them policy sweeteners like steel-import tariffs. Since 2000, the Republicans have lost governors' races in Virginia and New Jersey. Bush has a thin majority in the House of Representatives. He lost his majority in the Senate when he came out of the gate as a strong conservative. With the sole exception of his big early tax cut, legislatively he has either met the Democrats partway (as in his education bill) or been unable to pass his program (as in his energy bill). The Bushes may seem like a dynasty, but a glance at the electoral won-lost records of the President and his kin—former President Bush, and Governor Jeb Bush, of Florida—demonstrates that they're not politically invincible in the way that Ronald Reagan or the Kennedy brothers were. It is difficult to imagine that the President feels supremely confident about being reëlected. So he would appear to have neither the inclination nor the means to put through a daring new foreign-policy program.

But the war on terrorism and the ideas associated with it strike a very deep chord in Bush, aside from whatever political advantages they may offer. During the campaign, when Bush promised to restore honor and dignity to the Presidency, he really meant it—and he meant more by it than just forswearing hanky-panky in the Oval Office. Republicans, and particularly Bush, seem to have a view of Clinton and Gore that goes something like this: O.K., those guys may be more intellectually agile than we are, but we're tougher, more disciplined, more mature. We understand how precious the prestige of the United States is, and we won't squander it in loose talk and half-cocked action. The September 11th attacks gave Bush a chance to display what, to his mind, would be his competitive advantage over his predecessor and his chief rival; all the comments by his aides about how he had found his destiny were in effect admissions both of the extent of Bush's ambition and of a feeling that conditions before September 11th hadn't been propitious for a display of his strengths.

The realists are right when they say that Bush's talk and his actions have been out of synch. The President and his people may be praying that their sabre rattling will bring about a coup or a revolution in Iraq that will obviate the need for an invasion. That Bush so far has said more than he's done doesn't necessarily mean, however, that the really consequential decisions following from September 11th still lie before him. It's important to Bush to be a man of his word—that's the essence of his non-Clintonism. He has rhetorically committed the Presidency to a series of ideas that in turn commit the United States to a course of action. It seems as if the big decisions have already been made. ◆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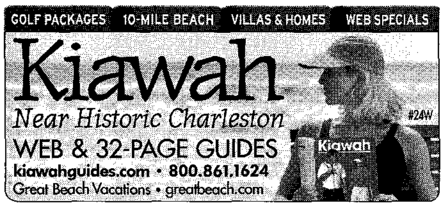
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THAT WAS NEW YORK

THE "HOLY GROUND"

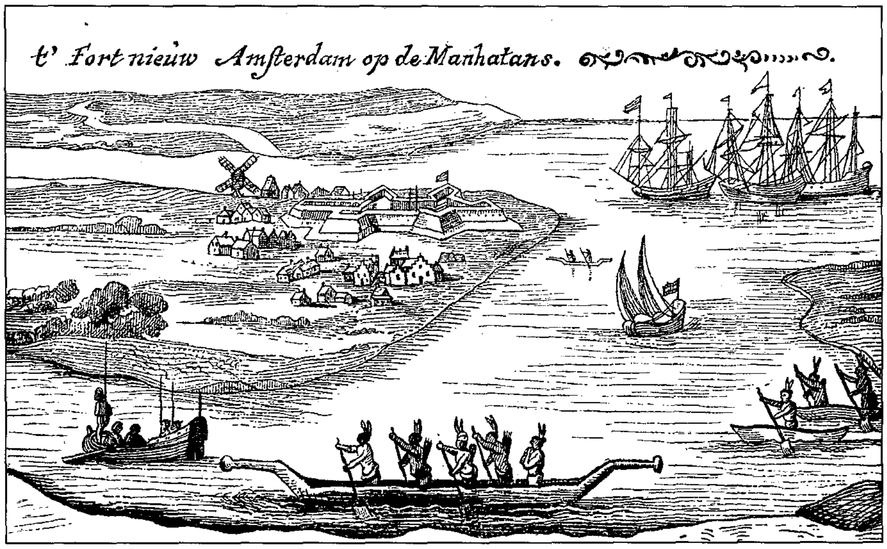
The early history of the World Trade Center site.

BY CATHLEEN SCHINE

At the northeast corner of Vesey and Church Streets, across from the graveyard of St. Paul's Chapel, there is a tiny, crowded deli called the Stage Door. I went there recently to meet Joyce Gold, a guide who used to lead a World Trade Center tour called "From Landfill to Landscape." She had agreed to show me some of the historical remains of the area, and after we picked up our coffee and squeezed past workers in orange mesh vests and tourists in F.D.N.Y. caps to get to the street outside, she led me up a flight of stairs to a large, hot room above the deli, full of empty cafeteria tables and chairs. An entire windowed wall of the room looked out on the sixteen-acre hole that had been the World Trade Center.

When the Trade Center towers were destroyed, on September 11th, I experienced, among many other emotions, a desire to know the history of the site better, much the way one wishes one had known a distant but beloved uncle better after he dies. A life has a beginning and a middle as well as an end, and I suppose that I wanted to uncover that narrative meaning. I had visited the World Trade Center only twice: once to interview a city official; once to attend an awards party held at Windows on the World. This was a distant uncle, indeed. The Twin Towers existed for me, as for many people, I suspect, only as landmarks against the sky, as familiar as the North Star, and as remote. The ground on which the towers sat was just a subway stop, a busy pavement, a downtown blur. Now that the airborne landmarks were gone, the ground was really all that was left, and, as people argued about what would replace the World Trade Center, I kept wondering what had been there before.

I wasn't even sure which streets were included and had to consult several maps before I could draw a grid, five blocks by four blocks, sixteen acres. The northern border was Vesey Street. South of Vesey, the trade center had been built over Fulton, Dey, and Cortlandt Streets. The southern border was Liberty Street. Church Street ran along the eastern edge. To the west, the site covered Greenwich and Washington Streets and ended at West Street.


t' Fort nieuw Amsterdam op de Manhatans.

Much of what would become downtown Manhattan was originally under water.

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From the Stage Door's second-floor dining room, I could clearly see the blank space that had once been criss-crossed by my grid. As Joyce Gold described buildings and streets that no longer existed, tourists below us struggled for a clear view of the site. They crowded up against chain-link fences and shuffled along in the sun on plywood platforms. Sitting in the secret, stuffy room with its unobstructed aerial vista was sobering, moving, and, as with any Ground Zero gawking, almost obscene: a sad, ironic inversion of Windows on the World.

After a while, the conversation turned to "The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909, Compiled from Original Sources and Illustrated by Photo-Intaglio Reproductions of Important Maps Plans Views and Documents In Public and Private Collections," an indispensable, comprehensive, wildly idiosyncratic work that I had encountered at the New-York Historical Society. "The 'Iconography' has always been my choice for my only book on a desert island," Gold said. It was completed in 1928 by Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, who had worked on it for nineteen years. Stokes originally envisioned one volume devoted to important historical moments. The record of New York's first three hundred years sprawled, instead, into six volumes of land grants, Common Council meetings, leases, legal challenges, hotel advertisements, funerals, fires, wars, ferry crossings, firehouse openings, riots, and just about anything else that happens in a great modern city.

In Volume I, where the early photo-intaglio views can be found, there are prints of lower Manhattan as the Dutch first saw it: a pristine, hilly, verdant land in which the native Munsees move effortlessly from clamming and fishing to hunting and farming. Explorers and Dutch traders described a cornucopia that is difficult even to imagine: six-foot lobsters, oysters a foot in diameter; seals and porpoises playing in the North River, as the Hudson was then called; grapevines and cherry trees scenting the air.

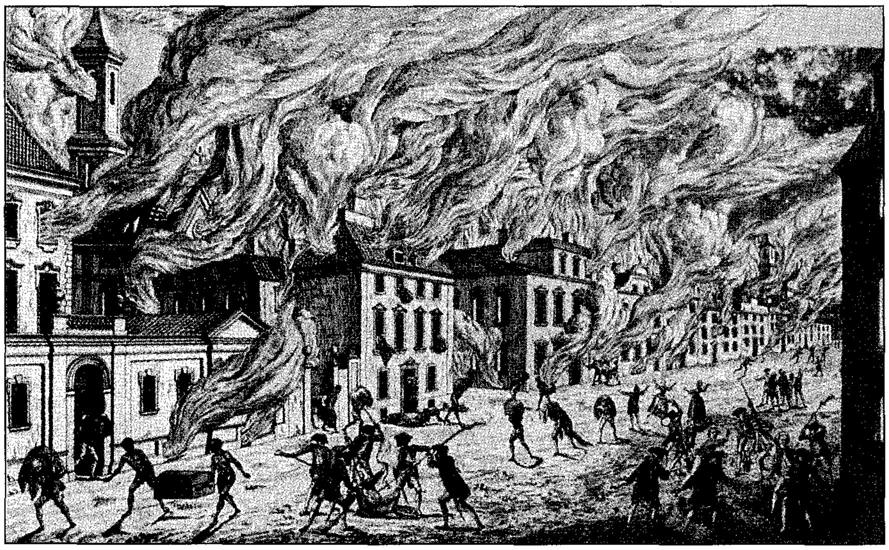
But as soon as I began to compare early maps to the grid I had drawn, I saw that the sixteen acres I wanted to know better was not covered with fragrant vines and fruit trees. More than half of it was covered by the river. I erased West Street from my grid, I erased Washington Street. Manhattan's seventeenth-century shoreline, and the story of the sixteen acres, began at Greenwich Street.

In 1614, the Tijger, a Dutch trading ship, burned at anchor and sank in the North River. Three centuries later, in 1916, workers were digging a tunnel for the I.R.T. subway line. At the intersection of Greenwich and Dey, twenty feet below ground, their shovels hit wood: the charred keel and three charred ribs of a ship. The style of the ship was early Dutch, and radiocarbon dating of the wood indicated that the vessel was built some time between 1450 and 1610. There is no record of any other ship going down in flames in the North River at that time, which suggests that the Tijger, a trading vessel a world away from home, burned and sank beneath the water where almost four hundred years later two towering buildings devoted to world trade burned and sank to the ground.

The men on the Tijger landed to collect pelts, not to find religious freedom or to impose religious conversion. New York, even in its infancy, was a creature of trade. But in subsequent years politics and competing Colonial interests also shaped the sixteen acres. There were Indian settlements nearby, but none on the site, nor was it part of the original Dutch trading post. The first direct mention of the area I was able to find was a reference to a survey conducted in 1625, when the corner was part of thirty-three acres set aside to grow food for the colony of the Dutch West India Company. The earliest street map of New Amsterdam, made in 1660, does not even extend that far north.

Offering leases and land grants as incentives, the Dutch attempted to colonize Manhattan, and the acres on the North River were divided into farms, or *bouweries*. Annetje Jansen, the daughter of New Amsterdam's midwife, became the owner of one of the farms in 1636, when her husband died. The British conquered New Amsterdam in 1664. In 1671, Annetje's heirs sold the farm—which ran from Broadway to the river and from today's Cortlandt Street to Fulton Street—to Colonel Francis Lovelace, the royal governor of what was now called New York, and the Bouwery Farm became the King's Farm. (One of Annetje's sons from her second marriage, Cornelius Bogardus, did not join in the conveyance, and his line of heirs unsuccessfully sued subsequent owners in 1750, 1760, 1807, and again in 1830. In 1847 alone, Cornelius Brower lost nine such lawsuits.)

In 1697, the Crown leased the King's Farm to Trinity Church for "60 bushells of winter wheat" (a different currency than had been used twenty-five years earlier, when part of the land was rented for six hundred guilders' worth of wampum). But after Queen Anne came to the throne, in 1702, and the King's Farm became the Queen's Farm, the new royal governor, hoping to strengthen the



In 1776, a fire destroyed everything on the site of the future World Trade Center.

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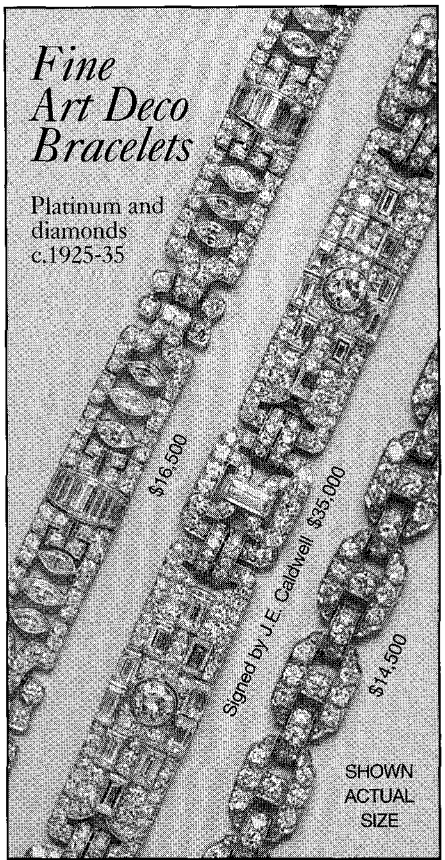

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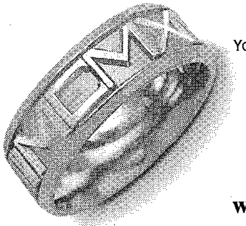

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position of the Anglicans in the colony, convinced the Queen to give the land to Trinity. In 1705, a patent was issued for "All those our Severall Closes, Peeces & Parcels of Land, Meadows and Pastures formerly called ye Duke's Farm and ye King's Farme and now known by the name of the Queens Farme with All & Singular ye fences, inclosures, Iprovemts and Appurtenances whatsoever thereunto belonging as ye same are now in ye Occupacon of and Enjoyed by . . . any former Tennant, situate, lying and being on ye Island Manhattans in ye City of New York aforesaid and Bounded on the East Partly by the Broadway, Partly by the Common and Partly by ye Swamp and on ye West by Hudsons River." The *bouwery* was reborn, yet again, this time as the Church Farm.

On seventeenth-century maps of New York, the farm is clean and clear. To the south, Colonial New York is crowded with streets, the shore with piers and wharves. But Annetje's *bouwery*, no matter how many times it changes its name, remains a remote piece of land bordered by swamps and undeveloped waterfront. It was not until the eighteenth century, a time of explosive growth and prosperity for New York, that the farm finally began to grow—literally. As Anne-Marie Cantwell and Diana diZerega Wall explain in "Unearthing Gotham," instead of building wooden piers, New Yorkers usually built slips that extended out into the water, creating little inlets where boats could moor. When the inlets began to silt up, they were filled in, and the streets were extended, creating new slips. Streets had begun to cross the Church Farm in the early eighteenth century. Crown Street had been laid out before 1700, and it went as far as the shoreline. But in 1794, when Crown Street was renamed Liberty Street by the new nation, it reached a shoreline that had been pushed far out into the Hudson River, beyond the natural slope to deep water, allowing ships to dock instead of having to anchor offshore. Left behind were brand-new chunks of prime waterfront real estate.

New York's landfill had begun in earnest in 1686, when Governor Dongan issued a charter that granted the city the right to raise revenue by selling "water lots." Buyers were able to build slips and create land between the high- and low-water marks. In 1730, the city was given even greater latitude: the Montgomerie Charter allowed the sale of land four hundred feet out into the river, past the low-water mark. The following year, the Common Council granted John Chambers "all the Ground under Water in the Rear of his Said Lott from high water Mark to Low Water Mark." For this he would pay an annual rent of six pence per foot of shoreline. He was also required to construct "A Street of five and forty foot in breadth at the foot of the Bank the Center of which Street to be at high Water Mark, and also Another Street next and fronting Hudsons River of thirty foot in breadth." The forty-five-foot-wide street became Greenwich, the thirty-foot-wide one was Washington. In 1769, the Common Council was petitioned by several citizens for a water lot extending two hundred feet into the North River, from Dey's Dock "northward to the corner of Bartly's Street"—Barclay Street. Cortlandt Street was laid out between Broadway and the Hudson in 1733; Dey Street was levelled and paved with stones in 1749. Fortunes were made in real estate.

In "New York City Cartmen 1667-1850," a history of the city's early teamsters, Graham Russell Hodges cites records of cartmen hauling sand and oyster shells to use as landfill on the Church Farm. Cantwell and Wall quote a physician's observation of a less pristine fill in 1796: "Carts were employed to collect such dirt and filth as all large and populous cities furnish in abundance; and with materials of this description [the area] was filled up, and to give greater salubrity to the mass, there were occasionally added, dead horses, dogs, cats, hogs, &c., &c."

During epidemics, builders were more careful to obey the laws requiring clean fill. Epidemics also pushed New Yorkers north and west as they escaped the crowded downtown. On the Lyne-Bradford Plan, a 1731 map, there is nothing on the farm between Broadway and the riverbank except a small, meandering road called Old Wind Mill Lane. In 1754, Greenwich and Washington Streets show up on a map for the first time, along with Church, Vesey, and Partition (now Fulton).

In a great banquet of landfill, the rural West Side expanded. Trinity Church was prominent in the area's growth—the host, really, of the real-estate feast. The church was granted water lots for West Street and Washington Street in 1751; Partition Street was ceded by the church to the city in 1761, as was Vesey Street. The latter, which according to one source was once known as Moordt Kuyl Straat, because of a murder that took place in a hollow where it met the river, had been named after the first rector of Trinity, William Vesey.

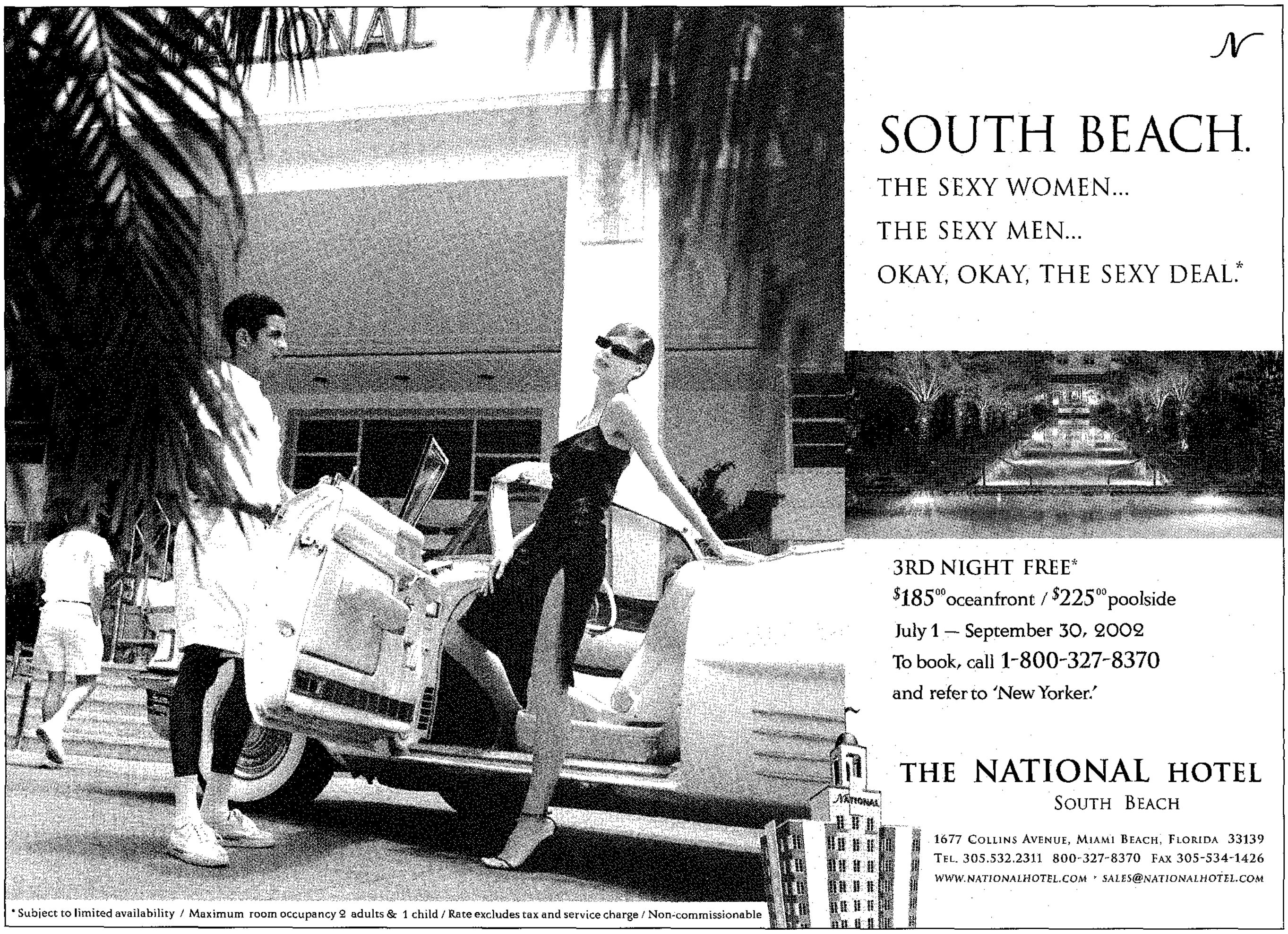
The cartmen who hauled bricks and wood for the construction of the Church Farm's new streets became its new tenants. Trinity did not sell the land. As was the custom among the English gentry, it offered long leases. Elizabeth Blackmar, in her fascinating real-estate history, "Manhattan for Rent, 1785-1850," describes the church's decision in 1734 "to lease out lotts of ground for any number of years not exceeding forty." But even in 1752 the church was still marketing the farm as "good pasture for cattle and horses." It was not until 1762 that the property was surveyed and mapped, most of it divided into twenty-by-hundred-foot lots. Trinity advertised two hundred of these lots for twenty-one, forty-two, or sixty-three-year leases. By this time, the opening of new streets and wharves had turned the area into a more accessible and attractive neighborhood. Ads for Trinity leases began to tout convenience for artisans. The farm was near Broadway, a major thoroughfare; it was near the ferries and wharves of the Hudson, it was near the Oswego Market. And the leases were cheap: between one and four pounds a year, compared with ten to twenty pounds for leases farther downtown. Carpenters, stonecutters, masons, grocers, butchers, ropemakers—an entire population of artisans was able to lease the land and build small wooden houses, which they could move with them when their leases ran out. Trinity Church Farm became a working-class neighborhood. Taverns, Hodges says, were the center of a culture in which cartmen raced their carts each morning on the new, straight streets and amused themselves with bullbaiting, gambling, and drinking.

The Church Farm just west of St. Paul's Chapel was also the site of the city's red-light district, home to as many as five hundred prostitutes. It was known as the Holy Ground. Convenient for the sailors and laborers who worked on the wharves and docks to the west, the Holy Ground was just a short stroll away for the students of King's College and for the rich living in fine, new houses on Broadway and working near Wall Street.

By the second half of the eighteenth century, the taverns had become centers of revolutionary activity. And when the Revolution came, it touched the area in a direct and devastating way. On September 21, 1776, just a few weeks after the disastrous Battle of Brooklyn, when the British took back Manhattan and George Washington and his troops barely escaped obliteration, a fire started at the Fighting Cocks, a tavern near Whitehall Slip, and swept uptown. The British suspected rebel arson (one of the patriots they arrested and hanged was Nathan Hale), and General Washington seems to have agreed. Watching the fire from Harlem Heights, he said, "Providence, or some good honest fellow, has done more for us than we were disposed to do for ourselves." Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, in "Gotham," their magisterial history of early New York, quote a newspaper account of the confusion and the shouting, which, "joined to the roaring of the flames, the crash of falling houses and the widespread ruin . . . formed a scene of horror great beyond description." The fire destroyed one-quarter of the city's buildings, including five hundred houses and everything on the site of the future World Trade Center.

On Evacuation Day, November 25, 1783, the British finally marched out, leaving behind a ruined city. At about this time, the heirs of Annetje Jans petitioned the legislature for return of the farm from Trinity Church, which was closely associated with the defeated British. The radical new legislature had a better idea—the State itself should sue Trinity for the land. Patriotism was high, and real estate was valuable, even real estate in ruins.

But New York was a city of practical merchants, Tory and patriot alike, and ideas of land reform were soon forgotten in the rush of everyday affairs. Trinity Church Farm remained Trinity Church Farm, and within a few years the busy waterfront community was rebuilt. New York, the Duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt wrote after visiting in 1797, had "increased and beautified with unheard of quickness. . . . This quarter of the city"—the burned section—"has been rebuilt since the peace, and is now one of the handsomest parts in it." New York still had terrible water, La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt said, but "the new part of the city built adjoining to Hudson's River, and parallel with its course, is infinitely more handsome; the streets there being generally straight,



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broad, intersecting each other at right angles, and the houses much better built."

New York was back in business, rising up out of the wreckage of fire and war and pestilence. New markets out West began to stimulate commercial development of the waterfront on Manhattan's western shore. The rise in rent and the price of land caused the working men, or mechanics, as they were called, to subdivide their houses and rent out rooms. Carpenters, laborers, sailors, some as young as fourteen, lived in the new boarding houses, three or four to a room, and joined the cartmen at the taverns for cockfighting, boxing, bearbaiting, drinking, and gambling. Some taverns also served as the headquarters of stagecoaches, which connected merchants with the rest of the East Coast. A tavern at 49 Cortlandt Street, near Greenwich, was the site of one of the earliest meetings of the Tammany Society (an anti-élitist political club that later became the notoriously corrupt Tammany Hall), which gathered there in 1787 to drink thirteen patriotic toasts.

The waterfront was booming, real estate was booming, and, just northeast of the Church Farm, on Broadway, wealthy merchants built grand houses. On one early rent roll, which the Trinity Church Archivist, Gwynedd Cannan, brought to my attention, there are several columns, listing names; lot numbers; the day the rent falls due; the amount owed; when it was paid; and, at the end, arrears. The first name under the heading "Fulton Street," written in the bookkeeper's even hand, is "Duncan Phyfe," who owed fifteen dollars for Lot 35. On a map of the Church Farm, Lot 35 is on the northwest corner of Fulton and Church, directly across from the vestry office of St. Paul's. Phyfe's cabinetmaking workshop, which at one time employed more than a hundred people, used new, simplified, sequential techniques, a sort of proto-assembly line, allowing him to employ lower-paid, semiskilled workers, many of whom probably lived in nearby boarding houses. Some of his clients lived nearby, too, like John Jacob Astor, whose big house, on Broadway and Barclay, was one of many in the newly fashionable area.

In 1771, one of the most important markets in the city was built between Partition and Vesey. In 1797, residents complained of "the number of Hay-Boats landing collectively . . . discommoding the Market, and Wood-Boats and other Vessels, which resort in great Numbers to said Wharf and Bason." By 1812, the area was so busy that the Common Council decided to build a new market on landfill where the Corporation Basin had been. The Washington Market, as it was called, was bounded by Washington, West, Partition, and Vesey Streets, and existed until 1883. The opening of the Erie Canal, in the eighteen-twenties, created even more activity on the waterfront, and the market grew. A fish market was added. And on April 21, 1828, the same day the legislature passed a law against duelling, the Common Council ordered a cupola to be erected.

The old Church Farm was now a frantic port. On the Ratzen Plan of 1766-67, we can already see that the ferry to Paulus Hook, New Jersey, left from Cortlandt Street, at the bottom of the King's Wharf, which stretched from Cortlandt to Dey Street. Rowboats and periaugers, flat-bottomed sailboats, had been used from the time of Dutch rule to carry wagons and livestock. But the age of the steam engine was approaching. In "Over and Back," an astonishingly comprehensive history of the New York ferryboat, Brian J. Cudahy describes the launching, in 1812, by Robert Fulton of the first commercial, steam-driven, double-ended ferry. It ran between Cortlandt Street and Paulus Hook. Fulton and his partner, Robert Livingston, had a monopoly on the steamboat business in New York and they enforced it with unrelenting vigor. Swift new steam ferries would push off from Cortlandt Street, but the Vesey Street pier was still home to a competitor's old-fashioned horse ferry, on which a team of draft animals was harnessed to a treadmill that turned the paddlewheel. Eventually, the steamboat monopoly was overturned by the Supreme Court, and, with the growth of the railroad, steam ferries became an even more important link to the rest of the country. In 1838, the New Jersey Railroad took over ferry service between New Jersey and Cortlandt Street.

After more than a decade of frenzied growth, and in the midst of high infla-

"I didn't do anything on my summer vacation—should I write about what I bought?"

tion (the cost of living went up sixty-six per cent in the first two months of 1836 alone) and a burgeoning labor movement, a notice appeared in the local papers: “Bread, Meat, Rent, Fuel! Their Prices Must Come Down. The Voice of the people Shall Be heard, and Will Prevail!” A meeting in City Hall Park was announced for “All Friends of Humanity, determined to resist Monopolists and Extortioners.” When the huge rally adjourned, a mob, several hundred strong, stormed off to the warehouse of Eli Hart & Co., at 175 Washington Street. The protesters, according to the next day’s *Evening Post*, “commenced violent proceedings upon it and those who were in it,” smashing doors and windows, and throwing two hundred barrels of flour onto the street, along with a thousand bushels of wheat. One month later, the Wall Street panic of 1837 hit New York.

The shape of what would become the World Trade Center site—indeed of all lower Manhattan—did not change from around 1840 until the nineteen-sixties, when landfill began on a whole new scale. The New York City Street Directory for 1851 shows a neighborhood still catering to the commercial waterfront. The Northern Hotel is at 113 West Street, Henry Bicks runs a boarding house at 139-141 Liberty Street. Next door is a stable; a cooper; Israel Reckhow, a pickle merchant; Bass Clark & Dibble, grocers, and a tobacconist selling “segars.” Washington Street, too, is full of boarding houses, with their neighboring stables and porterhouses. On a single block of Cortlandt, between Washington and West, four hotels and six grocers are listed, along with the offices of the Paterson Railroad, the New Jersey Railroad, and the Jersey City ferry.

The Wall Street area, to the south, had become identified exclusively with finance, and other businesses had migrated the few blocks north: jewellers, engravers, tinsmiths; purveyors of dry goods, fancy goods, and straw goods. The sixteen acres was home to Rauch & Co., pencil-case makers; B. P. Crandall & Son, Hobby Horses; Edward Norris, naturalist; Henry Gerker, curled hair; and John Lenning, huckster. “Israel Minor & Co., druggist” is listed at 214 Fulton, just east of Greenwich, and the store is still there in the background of an 1869 photograph of the tracks of the first cable-operated elevated railroad in New York City. Just down the block, at 193 Fulton Street, is a property that the Directory lists as: “Duncan Phyfe, residence.” Duncan Phyfe had moved to the area when it was still Trinity Church Farm, just a few generations after the Dutch settlers. Now the neighborhood was a completely integrated part of the greatest modern city in the world.

When New York’s ambitious landfill effort resumed, in 1966, neither shells nor animal carcasses were dumped by cartmen into the Church Farm’s acres. To reach the bedrock necessary for the World Trade Center’s foundation, dirt was removed from the site and dumped into the Hudson, pushing the shoreline out and making it possible to create Battery Park City. From the Stage Door’s dining room, I watched bulldozers working in the large seeping pit ringed with charred, abandoned buildings. They rolled down a slope that, for all I knew, mirrored the rocky shore that had greeted the Tijger. Then I left the deli and joined the tourists below, walking past what must have been the Holy Ground, trying to picture the controversial plans for the site’s redevelopment. History has always struck me as improbable, as improbable as the future, and certainly the history of these sixteen acres seemed less like a comforting eulogy than like an unfinished story of a varied, haphazard, ongoing life. I began to think about the title Stokes chose for his gigantic encyclopedia of New York. Not “The History of Manhattan Island” or “The Way We Lived Then” or any number of predictable, reasonable titles that one could imagine for a history of the city but “The Iconography of Manhattan Island.” An icon, when it is not an exquisite painting of an Eastern Orthodox saint, is generally understood to be an important and enduring symbol. How wonderful that the icons of I. N. Phelps Stokes are not only the grand and majestic images we associate with memorials but also the documents of thousands of daily events, disagreements, compromises, and mundane decisions—the shells and sand that shaped New York City. ♦

The House on Eccles Road
a novel by Judith Kitchen
S. Mariella Gable Prize Winner

“Rich and compelling.”
—*Kirkus Reviews*

What if Molly Bloom took center stage? What if she lived in suburban America? It is June 16, 1999, in Dublin, Ohio, and as Leo’s day mirrors the events of Joyce’s Bloomsday, Molly’s is a nearly clean slate.

Sister Mariella Gable was an avid supporter of the literary arts at the College of Saint Benedict, a Catholic liberal arts college for women, in Saint Joseph, Minnesota. This prize is supported through the Literary Arts Institute at the College of Saint Benedict.

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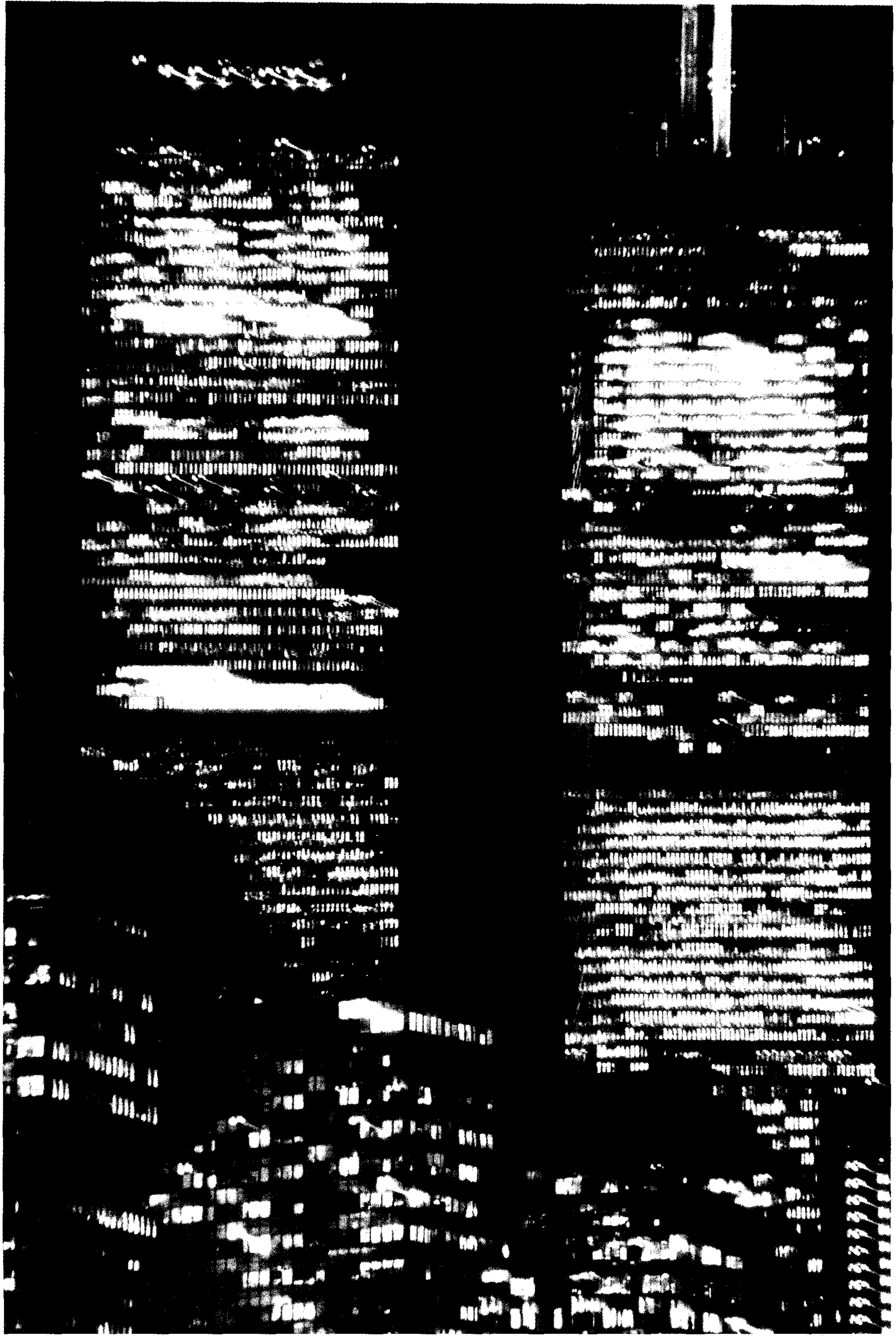


World Trade Center, November, 2000. Photograph by Sheila Metzner.

WHEN THE TOWERS FELL

From our high window we saw the towers
with their bands and blocks of light
brighten against a fading sunset,
saw them at any hour glitter and live
as if the spirits inside them sat up all night
calculating profit and loss, saw them reach up
to steep their tops in the until then invisible
yellow of sunrise, grew so used to them
often we didn't see them, and now,
not seeing them, we see them.

The banker is talking to London.
Humberto is delivering breakfast sandwiches.
The trader is already working the phone.
The mail sorter has started sorting the mail.
. . . *povres et riches*
. . . poor and rich
Sages et folz, prestres et laiz
Wise and foolish, priests and laymen
Nobles, villains, larges et chiches
Noblemen, serfs, generous and mean
Petiz et grans et beaulx et laiz
Short and tall and handsome and homely

The plane screamed low down lower Fifth Avenue,
lifted at the Arch, someone said, shaking the dog walkers
in Washington Square Park, drove for the north tower,
struck with a heavy thud, releasing a huge bright gush
of blackened fire, and vanished, leaving a hole
the size and shape a cartoon plane might make
if it had passed harmlessly through and were flying away now,
on the far side, back into the realm of the imaginary.

Some with torn clothing, some bloodied,
some limping at top speed like children
in a three-legged race, some half dragged,
some intact in neat suits and dresses,
they straggle out of step up the avenues,
each dusted to a ghostly whiteness,
their eyes rubbed red as the eyes of a Zahoris,
who can see the dead under the ground.

Some died while calling home to say they were O.K.
Some died after over an hour spent learning they would die.
Some died so abruptly they may have seen death from within it.
Some broke windows and leaned out and waited for rescue.
Some were asphyxiated.
Some burned, their very faces caught fire.
Some fell, letting gravity speed them through their long moment.
Some leapt hand in hand, the elasticity in last bits of love-time letting—I wish
I could say—their vertical streaks down the sky happen more lightly.

At the high window, where I've often stood
to escape a nightmare, I meet
the single, unblinking eye
lighting the all-night sniffing and lifting
and sifting for bodies, pieces of bodies, anything that is not nothing,
in a search that always goes on
somewhere, now in New York and Kabul.

She stands on a corner holding up a picture
of her husband. He is smiling. In today's
wind shift few pass. Sorry sorry sorry.
She startles. Suppose, down the street, that headlong lope . . .
or, over there, that hair so black it's purple . . .
And yet, suppose some evening I forgot
The fare and transfer, yet got by that way
Without recall,—lost yet poised in traffic.
Then I might find your eyes . . .
It could happen. Sorry sorry good luck thank you.
On this side it is "amnesia," or forgetting the way home;
on the other, "invisibleness," or never in body returning.
Hard to see clearly in the metallic mist,
or through the sheet of mock reality
cast over our world, bourne that no creature ever born
pokes its way back through, and no love can tear.

The towers burn and fall, burn and fall—
in a distant shot, smokestacks spewing oily earth remnants out of the past.
Schwarze Milch der Frühe wir trinken sie abends
Black milk of daybreak we drink it at nightfall
wir trinken sie mittags und morgens wir trinken sie nachts
we drink it at midday at morning we drink it at night
wir trinken und trinken
we drink it and drink it
This is not a comparison but a corollary,
not a likeness but a lineage
in the twentieth-century history of violent death—
black men in the South castrated and strung up from trees,
soldiers advancing through mud at ninety thousand dead per mile,
train upon train headed eastward made up of boxcars shoved full to the
    corners with Jews and Gypsies to be enslaved or gassed,
state murder of twenty, thirty, forty million of its own,
atomic blasts wiping cities off the earth, firebombings the same,
death marches, starvations, assassinations, disappearances,
entire countries turned into rubble, minefields, mass graves.
Seeing the towers vomit these black omens, that the last century dumped into
    this one, for us to dispose of, we know
they are our futures, that is our own black milk crossing the sky: *wir schaufeln*
    ein Grab in den Lüften da liegt man nicht eng we're digging
    a grave in the sky there'll be plenty of room to lie down there

Burst jet fuel, incinerated aluminum, steel fume, crushed marble, exploded
    granite, pulverized drywall, mashed concrete, berserked plastic,
    gasified mercury, cracked chemicals, scoria, vapor
of the vaporized—wafted here
from the burnings of the past, draped over
our island up to streets regimented
into numbers and letters, breathed across
the great bridges to Brooklyn and the waiting sea:
astringent, miasmic, empyreumatic, slick,

freighted air too foul to take in but we take it in,
too gruesome for seekers of the amnesiac beloved
to breathe but they breathe it and you breathe it.

A photograph of a woman hangs from a string
at his neck. He doesn't look up.
He stares down at the sidewalk of flagstone
slabs laid down in Whitman's century, gutter edges
rasped by iron wheels to a melted roundedness:
a conscious intelligence envying the stones.
Nie stają się, są.
They do not become, they are.
Nic nad to, myślałem,
Nothing but that, I thought,
zbrzydziwszy sobie
now loathing within myself
wszystko co staje się
everything that becomes.

And I sat down by the waters of the Hudson,
by the North Cove Yacht Harbor, and thought
how those on the high floors must have suffered: knowing
they would burn alive, and then, burning alive.
And I wondered, Is there a mechanism of death
that so mutilates existence no one
gets over it not even the dead?
Before me I saw, in steel letters welded
to the steel railing posts, Whitman's words
written as America plunged into war with itself: *City of the world!...*
Proud and passionate city—mettlesome, mad, extravagant city!
—words of a time of illusions. Then I remembered
what he wrote after the war was over and Lincoln dead:
I saw the debris and debris of all the dead soldiers of the war,
But I saw they were not as was thought.
They themselves were fully at rest—they suffer'd not,
The living remain'd and suffer'd, the mother suffer'd,
And the wife and the child and the musing comrade suffer'd...

In our minds the glassy blocks
succumb over and over into themselves,
slam down floor by floor into themselves.

They blow up as if in reverse, exploding
downward and outward, billowing
through the streets, engulfing the fleeing.

As each tower goes down, it concentrates
into itself, transforms itself
infinitely slowly into a black hole

infinitesimally small: mass
without space, where each light,
each life, put out, lies down within us.

—*Galway Kinnell*

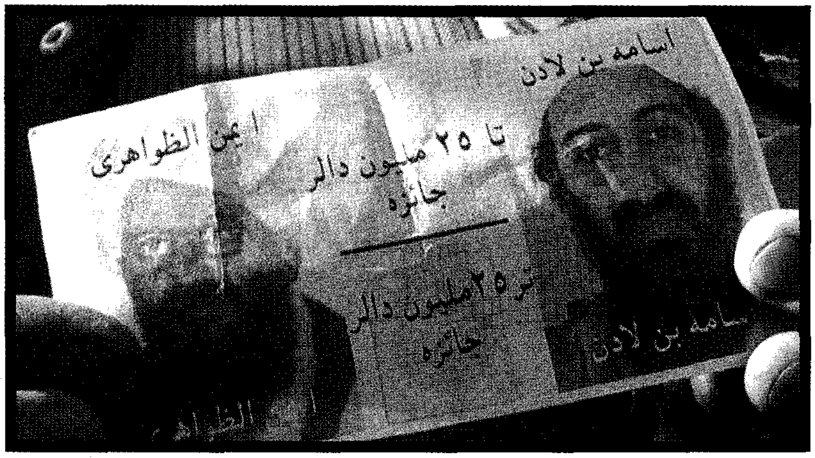
Quotations: "The Testament," by François Villon; "For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen," by Hart Crane; "Death Fugue," by Paul Celan; "Songs of a Wanderer," by Aleksander Wat; "City of Ships" and "When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloom'd," by Walt Whitman.

PROFILES

THE MAN BEHIND BIN LADEN

How an Egyptian doctor became a master of terror.

BY LAWRENCE WRIGHT



Last March, a band of horsemen journeyed through the province of Paktika, in Afghanistan, near the Pakistan border. Predator drones were circling the skies and American troops were sweeping through the mountains. The war had begun six months earlier, and by now the fighting had narrowed down to the ragged eastern edge of the country. Regional warlords had been bought off, the borders supposedly sealed. For twelve days, American and coalition forces had been bombing the nearby Shah-e-Kot Valley and systematically destroying the cave complexes in the Al Qaeda stronghold. And yet the horsemen were riding unhindered toward Pakistan.

They came to the village of a local militia commander named Gula Jan, whose long beard and black turban might have signalled that he was a Taliban sympathizer. "I saw a heavy, older man, an Arab, who wore dark glasses and had a white turban," Jan told Ilene Prusher, of the *Christian Science Monitor*, four days later. "He was dressed like an Afghan, but he had a beautiful coat, and he was with two other Arabs who had masks on." The man in the beautiful coat dismounted and began talking in a polite and humorous manner. He asked Jan and an Afghan companion about the location of American and Northern Alliance troops. "We are afraid we will encounter them," he said. "Show us the right way."

While the men were talking, Jan slipped away to examine a poster that had been dropped into the area by American airplanes. It showed a photograph of a man in a white turban and glasses. His face was broad and meaty, with a strong, prominent nose and full lips. His untrimmed beard was gray at the temples and ran in milky streaks below his chin. On his high forehead, framed by the swaths of his turban, was a darkened callus formed by many hours of prayerful prostration. His eyes reflected the sort of decisiveness one might expect in a medical man, but they also showed a measure of serenity that seemed oddly out of place. Jan was looking at a wanted poster for a man named Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, who had a price of twenty-five million dollars on his head.

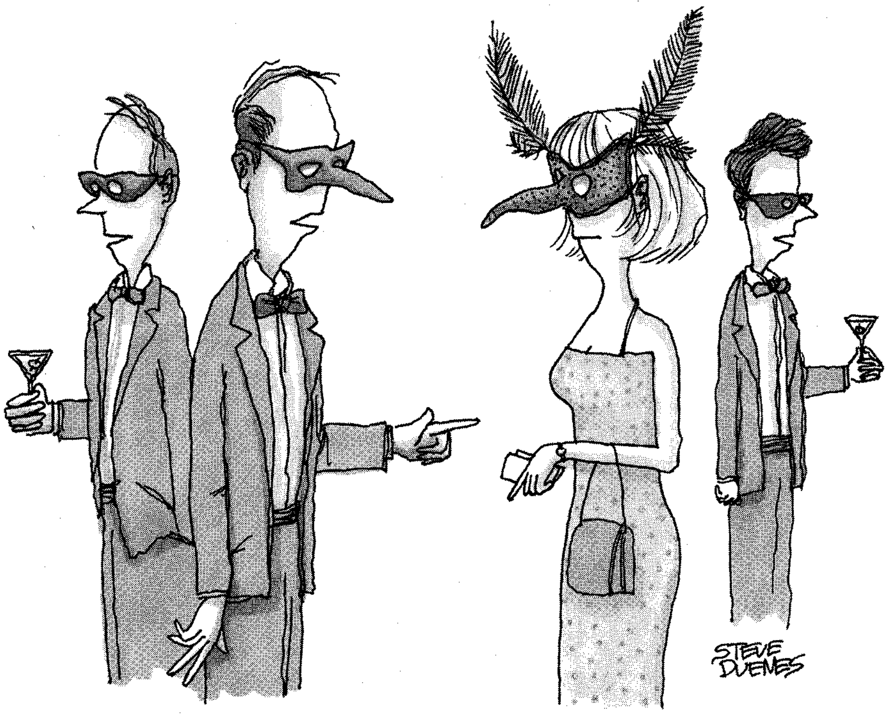
Jan returned to the conversation. The man he now believed to be Zawahiri said to him, "May God bless you and keep you from the enemies of Islam. Try not to tell them where we came from and where we are going."

There was a telephone number on the wanted poster, but Gula Jan did

For Ayman al-Zawahiri (left), Osama bin Laden

TOP: DARKO BANDIC/ASSOCIATED PRESS; RIGHT: CNN/GETTY IMAGES

was a savior—rich and generous, but also pliable and politically unformed. Opposite: a "Wanted" poster dropped by American airplanes.



"It's definitely true. Inane conversation is better with masks."

• •

not have a phone. Zawahiri and the masked Arabs disappeared into the mountains.

I—THE SPORTING CLUB

In June of 2001, two terrorist organizations, Al Qaeda and Egyptian Islamic Jihad, formally merged into one. The name of the new entity—Qaeda al-Jihad—reflects the long and interdependent history of these two groups. Although Osama bin Laden, the founder of Al Qaeda, has become the public face of Islamic terrorism, the members of Islamic Jihad and its guiding figure, Ayman al-Zawahiri, have provided the backbone of the larger organization's leadership. According to officials in the C.I.A. and the F.B.I., Zawahiri has been responsible for much of the planning of the terrorist operations against the United States, from the assault on American soldiers in Somalia in 1993, and the bombings of the American embassies in East Africa in 1998 and of the U.S.S. Cole in Yemen in 2000, to the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11th.

Bin Laden and Zawahiri were bound to discover each other among the radical Islamists who were drawn to Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion in 1979. For one thing, both were very much modern men. Bin Laden, who was in his early twenties, was already an international businessman; Zawahiri, six years older, was a surgeon from a notable Egyptian family. They were both members of the educated classes, intensely pious, quiet-spoken, and politically stifled by the regimes in their own countries. Each man filled a need in the other. Bin Laden, an idealist with vague political ideas, sought direction, and Zawahiri, a seasoned propagandist, supplied it. "Bin Laden had followers, but they weren't organized," recalls Essam Deraz, an Egyptian filmmaker who made several documentaries about the mujahideen during the Soviet-Afghan war. "The people with Zawahiri had extraordinary capabilities—doctors, engineers, soldiers. They had experience in secret work. They knew how to organize themselves and create cells. And they became the leaders."

The goal of Islamic Jihad was to overthrow the civil government of Egypt and impose a theocracy that might eventually become a model for the entire Arab world; however, years of guerrilla warfare had left the group shattered and bankrupt. For Zawahiri, bin Laden was a savior—rich and generous, with nearly limitless resources, but also pliable and politically unformed. "Bin Laden had an Islamic frame of reference, but he didn't have anything against the Arab regimes," Montasser al-Zayat, a lawyer for many of the Islamists, told me recently in Cairo. "When Ayman met bin Laden, he created a revolution inside him."

Five miles south of the chaos of Cairo is a quiet middle-class suburb called Maadi. A consortium of Egyptian Jewish financiers, intending to create a kind of English village amid the mango and guava plantations and Bedouin settlements on the eastern bank of the Nile, began selling lots in the first decade of the twentieth century. The developers regulated everything, from the height of the garden fences to the color of the shutters on the grand villas that lined the streets. They dreamed of an Egypt that was safe and clean and orderly, and also secular and ethnically diverse—though still married to British notions of class. They planted eucalyptus trees to repel flies and mosquitoes, and gardens to perfume the air with the fragrance of roses and jasmine and bougainvillea. Many of the early settlers were British military officers and civil servants, whose wives started garden clubs and literary salons; they were followed by Jewish families, who by the end of the Second World War made up nearly a third of Maadi's population. After the war, Maadi evolved into a community of expatriate Europeans, American businessmen and missionaries, and a certain type of Egyptian—one who spoke French at dinner and followed the cricket matches.

The center of this cosmopolitan community was the Maadi Sporting Club. Founded at a time when Egypt was occupied by the British, the club was unusual for admitting not only Jews but Egyptians. Community business was often conducted on the all-sand eighteen-hole golf course, with the Giza Pyramids and the palmy Nile as a backdrop. As high tea was served to the British in the lounge, Nubian waiters bearing icy glasses of Nescafé glided among the pashas and princesses sunbathing at the pool. In the garden were flamingos and a lily pond.

But the careful regulations could not withstand the pressure of Cairo's burgeoning population, and in the late nineteen-sixties another Maadi took root. "We called its residents the 'Road 9 crowd,'" Samir Raafat, a journalist who has written a history of the suburb, told me. "It was very much 'them' and 'us.'" Road 9 runs beside train tracks that separate the tony side of Maadi from the *baladi* district—the native part of town. Here donkey carts clop along unpaved streets past fly-studded carcasses hanging in butchers' shops, and peanut venders and yam salesmen hawk their wares. There is also, on this side of town, a narrow slice of the middle class, composed mainly of teachers and low-level bureaucrats who were drawn to the suburb by the cleaner air and the dream of crossing the tracks and being welcomed into the club.

In 1960, Dr. Rabie al-Zawahiri and his wife, Umayma, moved from Heliopolis to Maadi. Rabie and Umayma belonged to two of the most prominent families in Egypt. The Zawahiri (pronounced za-*wah*-iri) clan was creating a medical dynasty. Rabie was a professor of pharmacology at Ain Shams University, in Cairo. His brother was a highly regarded dermatologist and an expert on venereal diseases. The tradition they established continued into the next generation; a 1995 obituary in a Cairo newspaper for one of their relatives, Kashif al-Zawahiri, mentioned forty-six members of the family, thirty-one of whom were doctors or chemists or pharmacists; among the others were an ambassador, a judge, and a member of parliament.

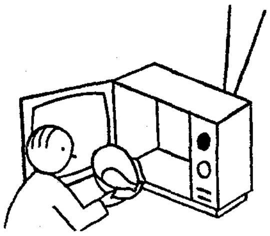
The Zawahiri name, however, was associated above all with religion. In 1929, Rabie's uncle Mohammed al-Ahmadi al-Zawahiri became the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, the thousand-year-old university in the heart of Old Cairo, which is still the center of Islamic learning in the Middle East. The leader of that institution enjoys a kind of papal status in the Muslim world, and Imam Mohammed is still remembered as one of the university's great modernizers. Rabie's father and grandfather were Al-Azhar scholars as well.

Umayma Azzam, Rabie's wife, was from a clan that was equally distinguished but wealthier and also a little notorious. Her father, Dr. Abd al-Wahab Azzam, was the president of Cairo University and the founder and director of King Saud University, in Riyadh. He had also served at various times as the Egyptian ambassador to Pakistan, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia. His uncle was a founding secretary-general of the Arab League. "From the first parliament, more than a hundred and fifty years ago, there have been Azzams in government," Umayma's uncle Mahfouz Azzam, who is an attorney in Maadi, told me. "And we were always in the opposition." At seventy-five, Mahfouz remains politically active: he is the vice-president of the religiously oriented Labor Party. He was a fervent Egyptian nationalist in his youth. "I was in prison when I was fifteen years old," he said proudly. "They condemned me for making what they called a 'coup d'état.'" The memory brought an ironic smile to his face. In 1945, Mahfouz was arrested again, in a roundup of militants after the assassination of Prime Minister Ahmad Mahir. "I myself was going to do what Ayman has done," he said.

Despite their pedigrees, Rabie and Umayma settled into an apartment on Street 100, on the *baladi* side of the tracks. Later, they rented a duplex at No. 10, Street 154, near the train station. High society held no interest for them. At a time when public displays of religious zeal were rare—and in Maadi almost unheard of—the couple was religious but not overtly pious. Umayma went about unveiled. There were more churches than mosques in the neighborhood, and a thriving synagogue.

Children quickly filled the Zawahiri home. The first, Ayman and a twin sister, Umnya, were born on June 19, 1951. The twins were extremely bright, and were at the top of their classes all the way through medical school. A younger sister, Heba, also became a doctor. The two other children, Mohammed and Hussein, trained as architects.

Obese, bald, and slightly cross-eyed, Rabie al-Zawahiri had a reputation as a devoted and slightly distracted academic, beloved by his students and by the neighborhood children. "He knew only his laboratory," Mahfouz Azzam told me. Zawahiri's research occasionally took him to Czechoslovakia, at a time when few Egyptians travelled, because of currency restrictions. He always returned laden with toys for the children. He sometimes found time to take them to the movies; Omar Azzam, the son of Mahfouz and Ayman's second cousin, says that Ayman enjoyed cartoons and Disney movies, which played three nights a week on an outdoor screen. In the summer, the family went to a beach in Alexandria. Life on a professor's salary was constricted, especially with five ambitious children to educate. The Zawahiris never owned a car until Ayman was out of medical school. Omar Azzam remembers that Professor Zawahiri kept hens behind the house for fresh eggs and that he liked to distribute oranges to his children and their friends. "Everyone was astonished," Omar said. "'Why all these oranges?' He'd say, 'They're better than vitamin-C tablets.' He was a pharmacology expert, but he was opposed to chemicals."



Umayma Azzam still lives in Maadi, in a comfortable apartment above several stores. She is said to be a wonderful cook, famous for her *kunafa*—a pastry of shredded phyllo filled with cheese and nuts and usually drenched in orange-blossom syrup. She inherited several substantial plots of farmland in Giza and the Fayyum Oasis from her father, which provide her with a modest income. Ayman and his mother share a love of literature. "She always memorized the poems that Ayman sent her," Mahfouz Azzam told me. Mahfouz believes that although Ayman maintained the Zawahiri medical tradition, he was actually closer in temperament to his mother's side of the family. "The Zawahiris are professors and scientists, and they hate to speak of politics," he said. "Ayman told me that his love of medicine was probably inherited. But politics was also in his genes."

For anyone living in Maadi in the fifties and sixties, there was one defining social standard: membership in the Maadi Sporting Club. "The whole activity of Maadi revolved around the club," Samir Raafat, the historian of the suburb, told me one afternoon as he drove me around the neighborhood. "If you were not a member, why even live in Maadi?" The Zawahiris never joined, which meant, in Raafat's opinion, that Ayman would always be curtained off from the center of power and status. "He wasn't mainstream Maadi; he was totally marginal Maadi,” Raafat said. “The Zawahiris were a conservative family. You would never see them in the club, holding hands, playing bridge. We called them *saidis*. Literally, the word refers to someone from a district in Upper Egypt, but we use it to mean something like ‘hick.’ ”

At one end of Maadi is Victoria College, a private preparatory school built by the British. During the nineteen-sixties, it was one of the finest schools in the country, and English was still the language of instruction. “You didn't see these buildings when I was here,” Raafat said, pointing to the high-rise apartments that have taken over Maadi in recent years. “It was all green, tennis courts and playing fields as far as you could see. We came to school in coats and ties.”

Zawahiri, however, attended the state secondary school, a modest low-slung building behind a green gate, on the opposite side of the suburb. “It was the hoodlum school, the other end of the social spectrum,” Raafat told me. The educational standards were far below those of Victoria College. “The two schools never even played sports against each other,” he said. “One was very Westernized, the other had a very limited view of the world. A lot of people will tell you that Ayman was a vulnerable young man. He grew up in a very traditional home, but the area he lived in was a cosmopolitan, secular environment. You have to blend in or totally retrench.”

Ayman's childhood pictures show him with a round face, a wary gaze, and a flat and unsmiling mouth. He was a bookworm and hated contact sports—he thought they were “inhumane,” according to his uncle Mahfouz. From an early age, he was devout, and he often attended prayers at the Hussein Sidki Mosque, an unimposing annex of a large apartment building; the mosque was named after a famous actor who renounced his profession because it was ungodly. No doubt Ayman's interest in religion seemed natural in a family with so many distinguished religious scholars, but it added to his image of being soft and otherworldly.

Although Ayman was an excellent student, he often seemed to be daydreaming in class. “He was a mysterious character, closed and introverted,” Zaki Mohamed Zaki, a Cairo journalist who was a classmate of his, told me. “He was extremely intelligent, and all the teachers respected him. He had a very systematic way of thinking, like that of an older guy. He could understand in five minutes what it would take other students an hour to understand. I would call him a genius.”

Once, to the family's surprise, Ayman skipped a test, and the principal sent a note to his father. The next morning, Professor Zawahiri met with the principal and told him, “From now on, you will have the honor of being the headmaster of Ayman al-Zawahiri. In the future, you will be proud.” Indeed, that incident was never repeated. “He was perfect in everything,” Ayman's cousin Omar told me. “In his last year in school, his twin sister used to study so much, but Ayman was not doing the same. One of our cousins said, ‘You will see the result. Ayman will get better grades than she.’ And it happened.”

Ayman often showed a playful side at home. “When he laughed, he would shake all over—*yanni*, it was from the heart,” Mahfouz says. But at school he held himself apart. “There were a lot of activities in the high school, but he wanted to remain isolated,” Zaki told me. “It was as if mingling with the other boys would get him too distracted. When he saw us playing rough, he'd walk away. I felt he had a big puzzle inside him—something he wanted to protect.”

II—THE MARTYR

In 1950, the year before Ayman al-Zawahiri was born, Sayyid Qutb, a well-known literary critic in Cairo, returned home after spending two years at Colorado State College of Education, in Greeley. He had left Cairo as a secular writer who enjoyed a sinecure in the Ministry of Education. One of his early discoveries was a young writer named Naguib Mahfouz, who won the 1988 Nobel Prize in Literature. “Qutb was our friend,” Mahfouz recalled recently in Cairo. “When I was growing up, he was the first critic to recognize me.” Mahfouz, who has been unable to write since 1994, when he was stabbed and nearly killed by Islamic fundamentalists, told me that before Qutb went to America he was at odds with many of the sheikhs, who he thought were “out of date.” According to Mahfouz, Qutb saw himself as part of the modern age, and he wore his religion lightly. His great passion was Egyptian nationalism, and, perhaps because of his strident opposition to the British occupation, the Ministry of Education decided that he would be safer in America.

Qutb had studied American literature and popular culture; the United States, in contrast with the European powers, seemed to him and other Egyptian nationalists to be a friendly neutral power and a democratic ideal. In Colorado, however, Qutb encountered a postwar America unlike the one he had found in books and seen in Hollywood films. “It is astonishing to realize, despite his advanced education and his perfectionism, how primitive the American really is in his views on life,” Qutb wrote upon his return to Egypt. “His behavior reminds us of the era of the caveman. He is primitive in the way he lusts after power, ignoring ideals and man-

CAREERIST
CBarsotti

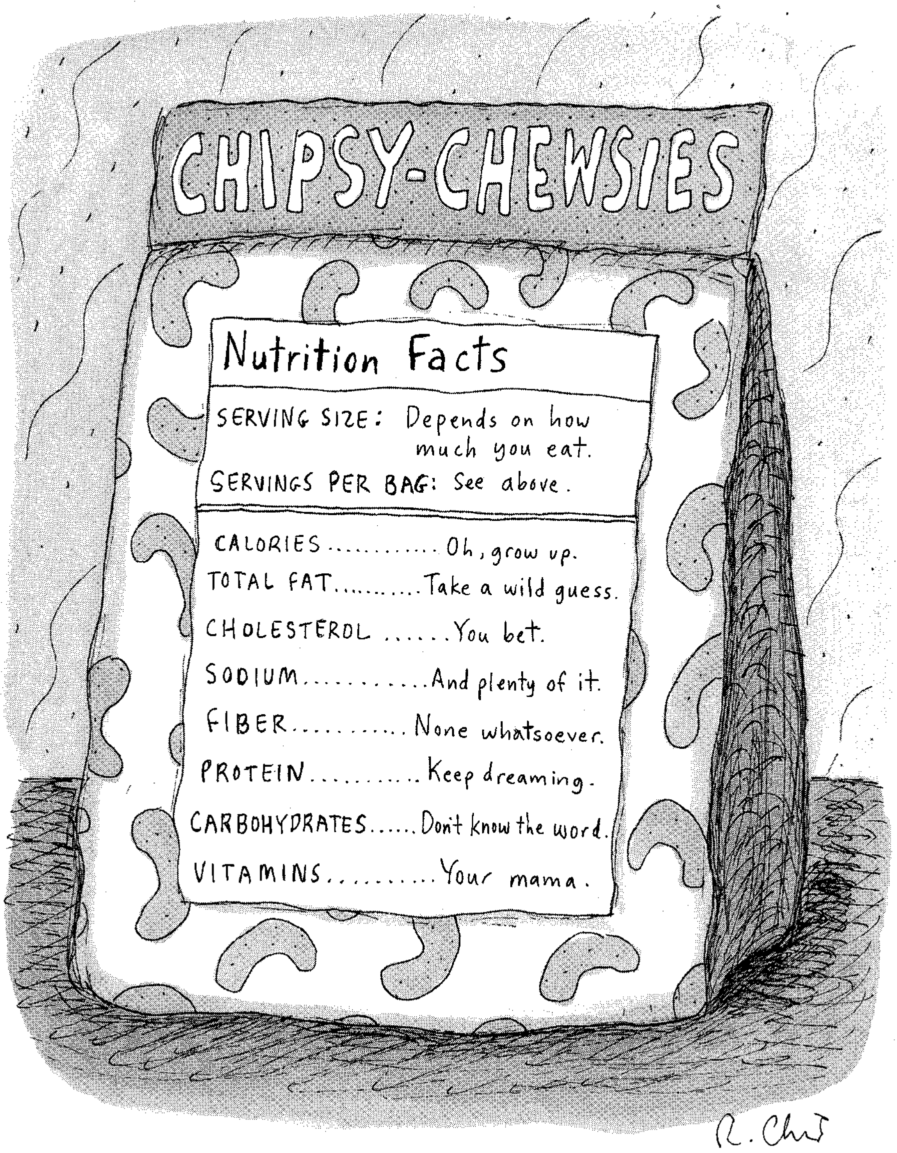
ners and principles." Qutb was impressed by the number of churches in America—there were more than twenty in Greeley alone—and yet the Americans he met seemed completely uninterested in spiritual matters. He was appalled to witness a dance in a church recreation hall, during which the minister, setting the mood for the couples, dimmed the lights and played "Baby, It's Cold Outside." "It is difficult to differentiate between a church and any other place that is set up for entertainment, or what they call in their language, 'fun,'" he wrote. The American was primitive in his art as well. "Jazz is his preferred music, and it is created by Negroes to satisfy their love of noise and to whet their sexual desires," he concluded. He even complained about his haircuts: "Whenever I go to a barber I return home and redo my hair with my own hands."

Qutb returned to Egypt a radically changed man. In what he saw as the spiritual wasteland of America, he re-created himself as a militant Muslim, and he came back to Egypt with the vision of an Islam that would throw off the vulgar influences of the West. Islamic society had to be purified, and the only mechanism powerful enough to cleanse it was the ancient and bloody instrument of jihad. "Qutb was the most prominent theoretician of the fundamentalist movements," Zawahiri later wrote in a brief memoir entitled "Knights Under the Prophet's Banner," which first appeared in serial form, in the London-based Arabic newspaper *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, in December, 2001. "Qutb said, 'Brother push ahead, for your path is soaked in blood. Do not turn your head right or left but look only up to Heaven.' "

Egypt was already in the midst of a revolution. The Society of Muslim Brothers, the oldest and most influential fundamentalist group in Egypt, instigated an uprising against the British, whose lingering occupation of the Suez Canal zone enraged the nationalists. In January, 1952, in response to the British massacre of fifty Egyptian policemen, mobs organized by the Muslim Brothers in Cairo set fire to movie theatres, casinos, department stores, night clubs, and automobile showrooms, which, in their view, represented an Egypt that had tied its future to the West. At least thirty people were killed, seven hundred and fifty buildings were destroyed, and twelve thousand people were made homeless. The dream of a cosmopolitan metropolis ended, and the foreign community began to leave. In July of that year, a military junta, dominated by an Army colonel, Gamal Abdel Nasser, packed King Farouk onto his yacht and seized control of the government, without firing a shot. According to several fellow-conspirators who later wrote about the event, Nasser secretly promised the Brothers that he would impose Sharia—the rule of Islamic law—on the country.

A power struggle developed immediately between the leaders of the revolution, who had the Army behind them, and the Muslim Brothers, who had a large presence in the mosques. Neither faction had the popular authority to rule, but, as Nasser imposed martial law and eliminated political parties, the contest narrowed to a choice between a military society and a religious one, either of which would have been rejected by the majority of Egyptians, had they been allowed to decide.

Nasser was pleased when Sayyid Qutb, who had been one of his closest advisers and chief political ideologues, became the head of the Muslim Brothers' magazine, *Al-Ikwan al-Muslimoun*. Presumably, he hoped that Qutb would enhance his standing with the Islamists and keep them from turning against the socialist and increasingly secular aims of the new government. One of the writers Qutb published was Zawahiri's uncle Mahfouz Azzam, who was then a young lawyer. Azzam had known Qutb nearly all his life. "Sayyid Qutb was my teacher," he told me. "He taught me Arabic in 1936 and 1937. He came daily to our house. He held seminars and gave us books for discussion. The


CHIPSY-CHEWSIES
Nutrition Facts
SERVING SIZE: Depends on how much you eat.
SERVINGS PER BAG: See above.
CALORIES .... Oh, grow up.
TOTAL FAT.......... Take a wild guess.
CHOLESTEROL ...... You bet.
SODIUM........... And plenty of it.
FIBER........... None whatsoever.
PROTEIN.......... Keep dreaming.
CARBOHYDRATES...... Don't know the word.
VITAMINS.......... Your mama.

first book he asked me to write a report on was 'What Did the World Lose with the Decline of the Muslims?' "

It quickly became obvious to Nasser that Qutb and his corps of young Islamists had a different agenda for Egyptian society from his, and he shut down the magazine after only a few issues had been published. But the religious faction was not so easily controlled. The ideological war over Egypt's future reached a climax on the night of October 26, 1954, when a member of the Brothers attempted to assassinate Nasser as he spoke before an immense crowd in Alexandria. Eight shots missed their mark. Nasser responded by having six conspirators executed immediately and arresting more than a thousand others, including Qutb. He had crushed the Brothers, once and for all, he thought.

Stories about Sayyid Qutb's suffering in prison have formed a kind of Passion play for Islamic fundamentalists. Qutb had a high fever when he was arrested, but the state-security officers handcuffed him and took him to prison. He fainted several times on the way. For several hours, he was kept in a cell with vicious dogs, and then, during long periods of interrogation, he was beaten. His trial was overseen by three judges, one of whom was a future President of Egypt, Anwar al-Sadat. In the courtroom, Qutb ripped off his shirt to display the marks of torture. The judges sentenced him to life in prison but, when Qutb's health deteriorated further, reduced that to fifteen years. He suffered chronic bouts of angina, and it is likely that he contracted tuberculosis in the prison hospital.

One line of thinking proposes that America's tragedy on September 11th was born in the prisons of Egypt. Human-rights advocates in Cairo argue that torture created an appetite for revenge, first in Sayyid Qutb and later in his acolytes, including Ayman al-Zawahiri. The main target of their wrath was the secular Egyptian government, but a powerful current of anger was directed toward the West, which they saw as an enabling force behind the repressive regime. They held the West responsible for corrupting and humiliating Islamic society. Indeed, the theme of humiliation, which is the essence of torture, is important to understanding the Islamists' rage against the West. Egypt's prisons became a factory for producing militants whose need for retribution—they called it "justice"—was all-consuming.

The hardening of Qutb's views can be traced in his prison writings. Through friends, he managed to smuggle out, bit by bit, a manifesto entitled "Ma'alim fi al-Tariq" ("Milestones"). The manuscript circulated underground for years. It was finally published in Cairo in 1964, and was quickly banned; anyone caught with a copy could be charged with sedition.

Qutb begins, "Mankind today is on the brink of a precipice. Humanity is threatened not only by nuclear annihilation but by the absence of values. The West has lost its vitality, and Marxism has failed. At this crucial and bewildering juncture, the turn of Islam and the Muslim community has arrived."

Qutb divides the world into two camps—Islam and Jahiliyya. The latter, in traditional Islamic discourse, refers to a period of ignorance that existed throughout the world before the Prophet Muhammad began receiving his divine revelations, in the seventh century. For Qutb, the entire modern world, including so-called Muslim societies, is Jahiliyya. This was his most revolutionary statement—one that placed nominally Islamic governments in the crosshairs of jihad. "The Muslim community has long ago vanished from existence," he contends. "It is crushed under the weight of those false laws and customs which are not even remotely related to Islamic teachings." Humanity cannot be saved unless Muslims recapture the glory of their earliest and purest expression. "We need to initiate the movement of Islamic revival in some Muslim country," he writes, in order to fashion an example that will eventually lead Islam to its destiny of world dominion. "There should be a vanguard which sets out with this determination and then keeps walking on the path."

Ayman al-Zawahiri heard again and again about the greatness of Qutb's character and the terrible things he endured in prison. The effect of these stories can be gauged by an incident that took place one day in the mid-sixties, when Ayman and his admiring younger brother Mohammed were walking home from the mosque after dawn prayers. Hussein al-Shaffei, the Vice-President of Egypt and one of the judges in the 1954 roundup of Islamists, "offered to give them a ride," Omar Azzam recalls. "We would all have been proud to have the Vice-President give us a ride—even to be in a car! But Ayman and Mohammed refused. They said, 'We don't want to get this ride from a man who participated in the courts that killed Muslims.' "

In 1964, President Abd al-Salaam Arif of Iraq prevailed upon Nasser to grant Qutb parole, but the following year he was arrested again and charged with conspiracy to overthrow the government. The prosecutors built their case primarily on inflammatory passages in "Milestones," but they also cited evidence that Qutb and the Muslim Brothers were planning to assassinate various public figures. "It was a revolutionary court, with no defense," Mahfouz Azzam, who was Qutb's lawyer, told me. Qutb received a death sentence. "Thank God," he said. "I performed jihad for fifteen years until I earned this martyrdom." Qutb was hanged on August 29, 1966, and the Islamist threat in Egypt seemed to have been extinguished. "The Nasserite regime thought that the Islamic movement received a deadly blow with the execution of Sayyid Qutb and his comrades," Zawahiri wrote in his memoir. "But the apparent surface calm concealed an immediate interaction with Sayyid Qutb's ideas and the formation of the nucleus of the modern Islamic jihad movement in Egypt." The same year Qutb was hanged, Zawahiri helped form an underground militant cell dedicated to replacing the secular Egyptian government with an Islamic one. He was fifteen years old.

III—AN UNDERGROUND LIFE

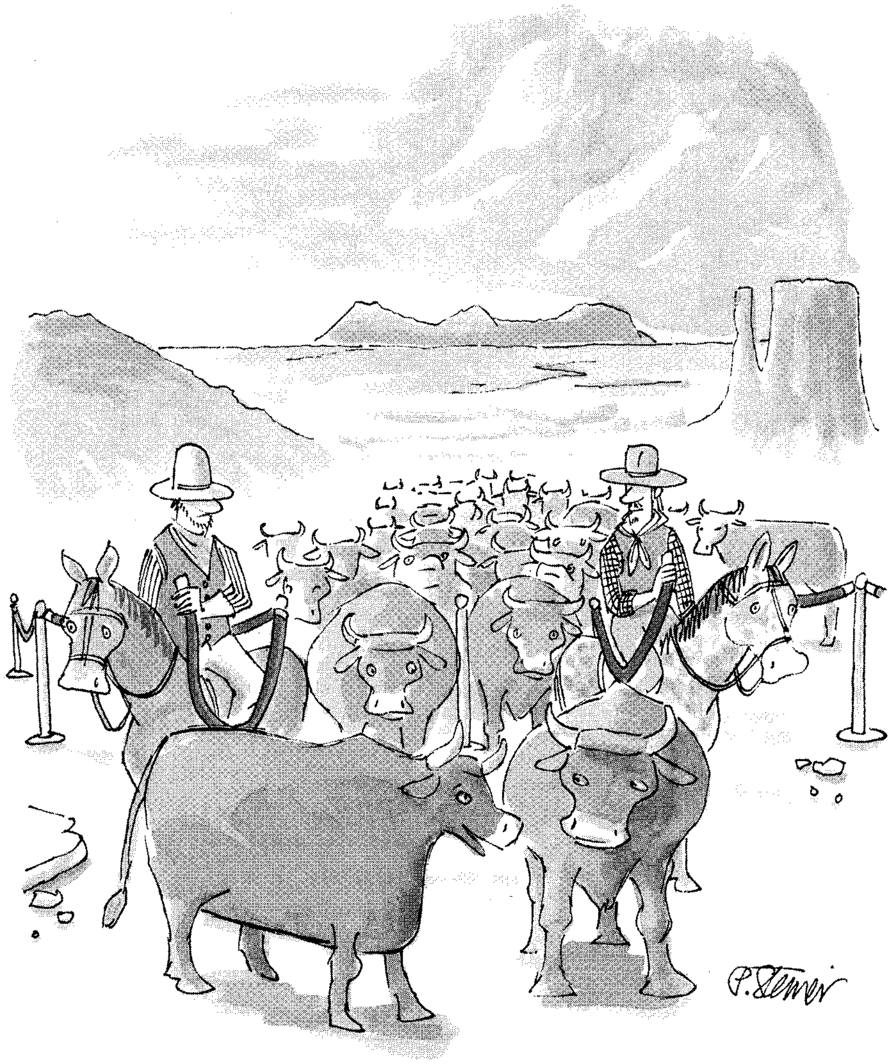
"We were a group of students from Maadi High School and other schools," Zawahiri testified about his days as a young radical, when he was put on trial for conspiring in the assassination of Anwar al-Sadat, in 1981. The members of his cell usually met in one another's homes; sometimes they got together at a mosque and then went to a park or to a quiet spot on the tree-lined Corniche along the Nile. In the beginning, there were five members, and before long Zawahiri became the emir, or leader. "Our means didn't match our aspirations," he conceded in his testimony. But he never seemed to question his decision to become a revolutionary. "Bin Laden had a turning point in his life," Omar Azzam points out, "but Ayman and his brother Mohammed were like people in school moving naturally from one grade to another. You cannot say those boys were naughty guys or playboys, then turned one hundred and eighty degrees. To be honest, if Ayman and Mohammed repeated their lives, they would live them the same way."

Under the monarchy, before Nasser's assumption of power, the affluent residents of Maadi had been insulated from the whims of the government. In revolutionary Egypt, they suddenly found themselves vulnerable. "The kids noticed that their parents were frightened and afraid of expressing their opinions," Zawahiri's former schoolmate Zaki told me. "It was a climate that encouraged underground work." Clandestine groups like Zawahiri's were forming all over Egypt. Made up mainly of restless or alienated students, they were small and disorganized and largely unaware of each other. Then came the 1967 war with Israel. The speed and the decisiveness of Israel's victory in the Six-Day War humiliated Muslims who had believed that God favored their cause. They lost not only their armies and territory but also faith in their leaders, in their countries, and in themselves. For many Muslims, it was as though they had been defeated by a force far larger than the tiny country of Israel, by something unfathomable—modernity itself. A newly strident voice was heard in the mosques, one that answered despair with a simple formulation: Islam is the solution.

The clandestine Islamist groups were galvanized by the war, and, as Nasser had feared, their primary target was his own, secular regime. In the terminology of jihad, the priority was to defeat the "near enemy"—that is, impure Muslim society. The "distant enemy"—the West—could wait until Islam had reformed itself. For the Islamists, this meant, at a minimum, imposing Sharia on the Egyptian legal system. Zawahiri also wanted to restore the caliphate, the rule of Islamic clerics, which had formally ended in 1924, after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, but which had not exercised real power since the thirteenth century. Once the caliphate was reëstablished, Zawahiri believed, Egypt would become a rallying point for the rest of the Islamic world. He later wrote, "Then, history would make a new turn, God willing, in the opposite direction against the empire of the United States and the world's Jewish government."

Nasser died of a heart attack in 1970. His successor, Sadat, desperately needed to establish his political legitimacy, and he quickly set about trying to make peace with the Islamists. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, a dissident sociologist at the American University in Cairo and an advocate of democratic reforms, who was recently sentenced to seven years in prison, told me last spring, "Sadat was looking around for allies. He remembers the Muslim Brothers. Where are they? In prison. He offers the Brothers a deal: in return for their political support, he'll allow them to preach and to advocate, as long as they don't use violence. What Sadat didn't know is that the Islamists were split. Some of them had been inspired by Qutb. The younger, more radical ones thought that the older ones had gone soft." Sadat emptied the prisons, without realizing the danger that the Islamists posed to his regime.

The Muslim Brothers, who were forbidden to act as a genuine political party, began colonizing professional and student unions. By 1973, a new band of young fundamentalists had appeared on campuses, first in the southern part of the country, then in Cairo. They called themselves Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya—the Islamic Group. Encouraged by Sadat's acquiescent government, which covertly provided them with arms so that they could defend themselves against any attacks by Marxists and Nasserites, the Islamic Group, which was uncompromising in its militancy, radicalized most of Egypt's universities. Soon it became fashionable for male students to



"I suppose they're less skillful with a rope than they once were, but I'm not complaining."

COURTESY SAMIR W. RAAFAT

grow beards and for female students to wear the veil.

Zawahiri claimed that by 1974 his group had grown to forty members. In April of that year, another group of young Islamist activists seized weapons from the arsenal of a military school, with the intention of marching on the Arab Socialist Union, where Sadat was preparing to address the nation's leaders. The attempted coup d'état was very much along the lines of what Zawahiri had been advocating: rather than revolution, he favored a sudden, surgical military action, which would be far less bloody. The coup was put down, but only after a shootout that left eleven dead.

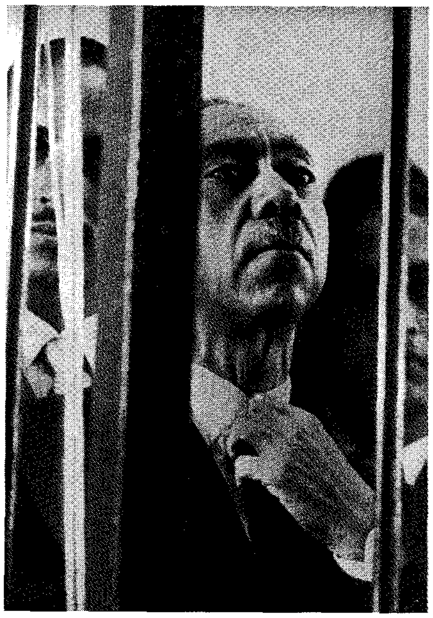
The Cairo University medical school, where Zawahiri was specializing in surgery, was boiling with Islamic activism. And yet Zawahiri's underground life was a secret even to his family, according to a recent article in the Egyptian press, which quoted his younger sister, Heba, on the subject. It was also a secret to his friends and classmates. "Ayman never joined political activities during this period," I was told by Dr. Essam Elerian, who was a colleague of Zawahiri's and is now the leader of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt. "He was a witness from outside."

Zawahiri was tall and slender, and he wore a mustache that paralleled the flat lines of his mouth. His face was thin, and his hairline was in retreat. He dressed in Western clothes, usually a coat and tie. He did not completely hide his political feelings, however. In the seventies, while he was in medical school, he gave a campus tour to an American newsman, Abdallah Schleifer, who is now a professor of media studies at the American University in Cairo. A gangly, wiry-haired man who wears a goatee, a throwback to his beatnik phase in the late fifties, Schleifer was a challenging figure in Zawahiri's life. He was brought up in a non-observant Jewish family on Long Island. He went through a Marxist period and then, during a trip to Morocco in 1962, he encountered the Sufi tradition of Islam. One meaning of the word "Islam" is to surrender, and that is what happened to Schleifer. He converted, changed his name from Marc to Abdallah, and has spent his professional life since then in the Middle East. In 1974, when Schleifer first came to Cairo, as the bureau chief for NBC News, Zawahiri's uncle Mahfouz Azzam became a kind of sponsor for him. "Converts often get adopted, and Mahfouz was fascinating," Schleifer told me. "To him, it was sort of a gas that an American had taken Islam. I had the feeling I was under the protection of the whole Azzam family."

Recalling his first meeting with Zawahiri, Schleifer said, "He was scrawny and his eyeglasses were extremely prominent. He looked like a left-wing City College intellectual of thirty years earlier." During the tour, Zawahiri proudly pointed out students who were painting posters for political demonstrations, and he boasted that the Islamist movement had found its greatest recruiting success in the university's two most élite faculties—the medical and engineering schools. "Aren't you impressed by that?" he said.

Schleifer replied that in the sixties those same faculties had been strongholds of the Marxist youth. The Islamist movement, he observed, was merely the latest trend in student rebellions. "I patronized him," Schleifer remembers. "I said, 'Listen, Ayman, I'm an ex-Marxist. When you talk, I feel like I'm back in the Party. I don't feel as if I'm with a traditional Muslim.' He was well bred and polite, and we parted on a friendly note. But I think he was puzzled."

Schleifer encountered Zawahiri again at a celebration of the Eid festival, one of the holiest Muslim days of the year. "I heard they were going to have outdoor prayer in the Farouk Mosque in Maadi," he recalls. "So I thought, Great, I'll go pray in their lovely garden. And who do I see but Ayman and one of his brothers. They were very intense. They laid out plastic prayer mats and set up a microphone." What was supposed to be a meditative day of chanting the Koran



From left: upper-class Egyptians in Maadi in the nineteen-thirties; mobs set fire to a movie theatre in 1952; Sayyid Qutb, whose bitter portrait of America influenced many young Muslims.

LEFT: TOPHAM/THE IMAGE WORKS; RIGHT: AKHBAR AL-YOM

turned into a contest between the congregation and the Zawahiri brothers with their microphone. "I realized that they were introducing the Salafist formula, which does not recognize any Islamic traditions after the time of the Prophet," Schleifer told me. "It was chaotic. Afterward, I went over to Zawahiri and said, 'Ayman, this is wrong.' He started to explain. I said, 'I'm not going to argue with you. I'm a Sufi and you're a Salafist. But you are making *fitna*' "—a term for stirring up trouble, which is proscribed by the Koran—" 'and if you want to do that you should do it in your own mosque.' " According to Schleifer, Zawahiri meekly responded, "You're right, Abdallah."

Eventually, in the late seventies, the various underground groups began to discover each other. Four of these cells, including Zawahiri's, merged to form Egyptian Islamic Jihad. Their leader was a young man named Kamal Habib. Like Zawahiri, Habib, who had graduated in 1979 from Cairo University's Faculty for Economics and Political Science, was the kind of driven intellectual who might have been expected to become a leader of the country but turned violently against the status quo. Arrested in 1981 on charges related to the assassination of Sadat, he was released from prison after serving a ten-year sentence. In Cairo earlier this year, Habib told me, "Most of our generation belonged to the middle or the upper-middle class. As children, we were expected to advance in conventional society, but we didn't do what our parents dreamed for us. And this is still a puzzling issue for us. For example, Ayman finished his degree as a doctor, specializing in surgery, and set up a clinic in a duplex apartment that he shared with his parents in Maadi. Anybody else would have been happy with this. But Ayman was not happy, and this led him into trouble."

Zawahiri graduated from medical school in 1974, then spent three years as a surgeon in the Egyptian Army, posted at a base outside Cairo. He was now in his late twenties, and it was time for him to marry. According to members of his family, he had never had a girlfriend. "Our custom is to have friends or relations suggest a spouse," his cousin Omar told me. "If they find acceptance, they are allowed to meet once or twice, then start the engagement. It's not a love story." One of the possible brides suggested to Ayman was Azza Nowair, the daughter of a prominent Cairo family. Both her parents were lawyers. Azza had been born in a villa and brought up in a handsome Maadi home. In another time, she might have become a professional woman or a socialite going to parties at the Sporting Club, but at Cairo University she adopted the *hijab*, the headscarf that has become a badge of conservatism among Muslim women. Azza's decision to veil herself was a shocking disavowal of her class. "Before that, she had worn the latest fashions," her older brother, Essam, told me. "We didn't want her to be so religious. She started to pray a lot and read the Koran. And, little by little, she changed completely." Soon, Azza went further and put on the *niqab*, the veil that covers a woman's face below the eyes. According to her brother, Azza spent whole nights reading the Koran. When he woke in the morning, he would find her sitting on the prayer mat with the Koran in her hands, fast asleep.

The *niqab* imposed a formidable barrier for a marriageable young woman. Because of Azza's wealthy, distinguished family, she had many suitors, but they all insisted that she drop the veil. Azza refused. "She wanted someone who would accept her as she was," her brother told me. "Ayman was looking for that type of person."

At the first meeting between Azza and Ayman, according to custom Azza lifted her veil for a few minutes. "He saw her face and then he left," Essam said. The young couple talked briefly on one other occasion after that, but it was little more than a formality. Ayman never saw his fiancée's face again until after the marriage ceremony. He had made a favorable impression on the Nowair family, who were a little dazzled by his distinguished ancestry. "He was polite and agreeable," Essam says. "He was very religious, and he didn't greet women. He wouldn't even look at a woman if she was wearing a short skirt." He apparently never talked about politics with Azza's family, and it's not clear how much he revealed about his activism to her. She once confided to Omar Azzam that her greatest desire was to become a martyr.

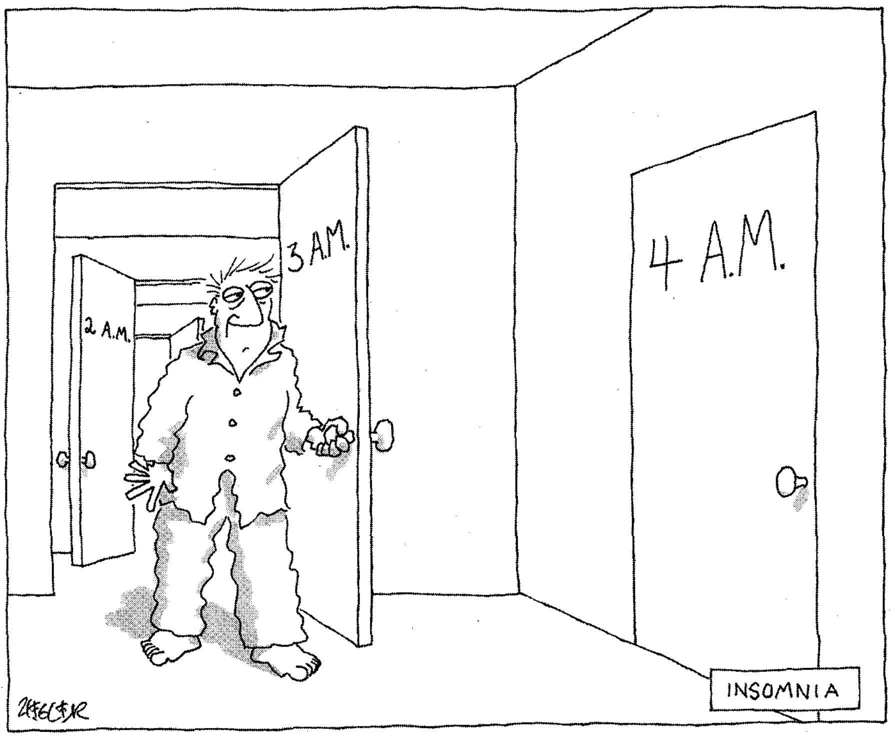
Their wedding was held in February, 1978, at the Continental-Savoy Hotel, which had slipped from colonial grandeur into dowdy respectability. According to the wishes of the bride and groom, there was no music, and photographs were forbidden. "It was pseudo-traditional," Schleifer recalls. "Lots of cups of coffee and no one cracking jokes."

IV—CROSSING THE KHYBER PASS

"My connection with Afghanistan began in the summer of 1980 by a twist of fate," Zawahiri writes in his memoir. He was covering for another doctor at a Muslim Brothers' clinic in Cairo, when the director of the clinic asked if Zawahiri would like to accompany him to Pakistan to tend to the Afghan refugees. Thousands were fleeing across the border as a result of the Soviet invasion, which had begun a few months earlier. Although he had recently got married, Zawahiri writes that he "immediately agreed." He had been preoccupied with the problem of finding a secure base for jihad, which seemed practically impossible in Egypt. "The River Nile runs in its narrow valley between two deserts that have no vegetation or water," he goes on. "Such a terrain made guerrilla warfare in Egypt impossible and, as a result, forced the inhabitants of this valley to submit to the central government and to be exploited as workers and compelled them to be recruited into its army."

Zawahiri travelled to Peshawar with an anesthesiologist and a plastic surgeon. "We were the first three Arabs to arrive there to participate in relief work," he writes. He spent four months in Pakistan, working for the Red Crescent Society, the Islamic arm of the Red Cross.

Peshawar sits at the eastern end of the Khyber Pass, the historic concourse of invading armies since the days of Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan. After the British abandoned the area, in 1947, Peshawar again became a quiet farming town, and the gates to the city were closed at midnight. When Zawahiri arrived, however, it was teeming with arms merchants and opium dealers. Young men from other Muslim countries were beginning to hear the call of jihad, and they came to Peshawar, often with nothing more than a phone number in their pockets, and sometimes without even that. Their goal was to become *shaheed*—a martyr—and they asked only to be pointed in the direction of the war. Osama bin Laden was one of the first to arrive. He spent much of his time shuttling between Peshawar and Saudi Arabia, raising money for the cause.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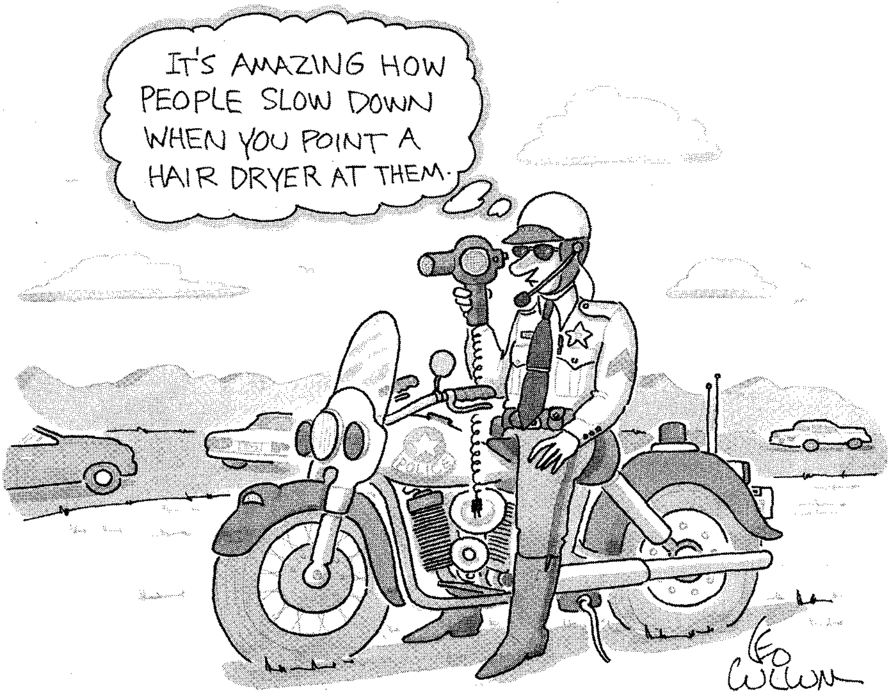
INSOMNIA

The city also had to cope with the influx of uprooted and starving Afghans. By the end of 1980, there were 1.4 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan—a number that nearly doubled the following year—and almost all of them came through Peshawar, seeking shelter in nearby camps. Many of the refugees were casualties of Soviet land mines or of the intensive bombing of towns and cities. The conditions in the clinics and hospitals were appalling. Zawahiri reported home that he sometimes had to use honey to sterilize wounds.

He made several trips across the border into Afghanistan. "Tribesmen took Ayman over the border," Omar Azzam told me. He was one of the first outsiders to witness the courage of the Afghan fighters, who were defending themselves on foot or on horseback with First World War carbines. American Stinger missiles would not be delivered until 1986, and Eastern-bloc weapons that the C.I.A. had smuggled in were not yet in the hands of the fighters. But the mujahideen already sensed that they were becoming pawns in the superpowers' game.

That fall, Zawahiri returned to Cairo full of stories about the "miracles" that were taking place in the jihad against the Soviets. When a delegation of mujahideen leaders came to Cairo, Zawahiri took his uncle Mahfouz to the venerable Shepheard's Hotel to meet them. The two men presented an idea that had come from Abdallah Schleifer. As the NBC bureau chief, Schleifer had been frustrated by the inability of Western news organizations to get close to the war. He said to Zawahiri, "Send me three bright young Afghans, and I'll train them to use film, and they can start telling their story."

When Schleifer called on Zawahiri to discuss the proposal, he was surprised by his manner. "He started off by saying that the Americans were the real enemy and had to be confronted," Schleifer told me.


IT'S AMAZING HOW PEOPLE SLOW DOWN WHEN YOU POINT A HAIR DRYER AT THEM.
POLICE

"I said, 'I don't understand. You just came back from Afghanistan, where you're coöperating with the Americans. Now you're saying America is the enemy?' "

"Sure, we're taking American help to fight the Russians," Zawahiri replied. "But they're equally evil."

"How can you make such a comparison?" Schleifer said. "There is more freedom to practice Islam in America than here in Egypt. And in Afghanistan the Soviets closed down fifty thousand mosques!"

Schleifer recalls, "The conversation ended on a bad note. In our previous debates, it was always eye to eye, and you could break the tension with a joke. Now I felt that he wasn't talking to me; he was addressing a mass rally of a hundred thousand people. It was all rhetoric." Nothing came of Schleifer's offer.

In March of 1981, Zawahiri returned to Peshawar for another tour of duty with the Red Crescent Society. This time, he cut short his stay and returned to Cairo after two months. He wrote in his memoir that he regarded the Afghan jihad as "a training course of the utmost importance to prepare the Muslim mujahideen to wage their awaited battle against the superpower that now has sole dominance over the globe, namely, the United States."

Islamic militancy had become a devastating force throughout the Middle East. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had returned to Iran from Paris in 1979 and led the first successful Islamist takeover of a major country. When Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, the exiled Shah, sought treatment for cancer in the United States, the Ayatollah incited student mobs to attack the American Embassy in Tehran. They held fifty-two Americans hostage, and the United States severed all diplomatic ties with Iran. That year, Islamic militants also attacked the Grand Mosque in Mecca during the hajj, the annual pilgrimage of the faithful, in protest against what they viewed as the ruling Saud family's illegitimate stewardship of Islam's holiest places.

For Muslims everywhere, Khomeini reframed the debate with the West. Instead of conceding the future of Islam to a secular, democratic model, he imposed a stunning reversal. His sermons summoned up the unyielding force of the Islam of a previous millennium in language that foreshadowed bin Laden's revolutionary diatribes. The specific target of his anger against the West was freedom. "Yes, we are reactionaries, and you are enlightened intellectuals: you intellectuals do not want us to go back fourteen hundred years," he said, immediately after the revolution. "You, who want freedom, freedom for everything, the freedom of parties, you who want all the freedoms, you intellectuals: freedom that will corrupt our youth, freedom that will pave the way for the oppressor, freedom that will drag our nation to the bottom." As early as the nineteen-forties, Khomeini had signalled his readiness to use terror to humiliate the perceived enemies of Islam, providing theological cover in addition to material support: "People cannot be made obedient except with the sword! The sword is the key to Paradise, which can be opened only for holy warriors!"

This defiant turn against democratic values had been implicit in the writings of Qutb and other early Islamists, and it now shaped the Islamist agenda. The overnight transformation of a relatively wealthy, powerful modern country such as Iran into a rigid theocracy proved that the Islamists' dream was eminently achievable, and it quickened their desire to act.

In Egypt, President Sadat called Khomeini a "lunatic madman . . . who has turned Islam into a mockery." Sadat invited the ailing Shah to take up residence in Egypt, and he died there the following year.

In April of 1979, Egyptians voted to approve the peace treaty with Israel, which had been celebrated with a three-way handshake between President Jimmy Carter, Sadat, and the Israeli Prime Minister, Menachem Begin, on the White House lawn a few months earlier. The referendum was such a charade—99.9 per cent of the voters reportedly approved it—that it underscored how dangerously controversial Sadat's decision to make peace was. In response to a series of demonstrations orchestrated by the Islamists, Sadat banned all religious student associations. Reversing his position of tolerating these groups, he now declared, "Those who wish to practice Islam can go to the mosques, and those who wish to engage in politics may do so through legal institutions." The Islamists insisted that their religion did not permit such distinctions; Islam was a total system that encompassed all of life, including law and government. Sadat went as far as to ban the *niqab* at universities. Many who said that he had signed his death warrant when he made peace with Israel now also characterized him as a heretic. Under Islamic law, that was an open invitation to assassination.

Zawahiri envisioned not merely the

removal of the head of state but a complete overthrow of the existing order. Stealthily, he had been recruiting officers from the Egyptian military, waiting for the moment when Islamic Jihad had accumulated enough strength in men and weapons to act. His chief strategist was Aboud al-Zumar, a colonel in the intelligence branch of the Egyptian Army and a military hero of the 1973 war with Israel. Zumar's plan was to kill the most powerful leaders of the country and capture the headquarters of the Army and the state security, the telephone-exchange building, and the radio-and-television building. From there, news of the Islamic revolution would be broadcast, unleashing—he expected—a popular uprising against secular authority all over the country. It was, Zawahiri later testified, "an elaborate artistic plan."

One of the members of Zawahiri's cell was a daring tank commander named Isam al-Qamari. Zawahiri, in his memoir, characterizes Qamari as "a noble person in the true sense of the word. . . . Most of the sufferings and sacrifices that he endured willingly and calmly were the result of his honorable character." Although Zawahiri was the senior member of the Maadi cell, he often deferred to Qamari, who had a natural sense of command—a quality that Zawahiri notably lacked. "Qamari saw that something was missing in Ayman," said Yasser al-Sirri, an alleged member of Jihad—he denies any affiliation with the group—who took refuge in London after receiving a death sentence in Egypt. "He told Ayman, 'No matter what group you belong to, you cannot be its leader.' "

According to Zawahiri's memoir, Qamari began smuggling weapons and ammunition from Army strongholds and storing them in Zawahiri's medical clinic in Maadi. In February of 1981, as the weapons were being transferred from the clinic to a warehouse, police arrested a man carrying a bag loaded with guns, along with maps that showed the location of all the tank emplacements in Cairo. Qamari, realizing that he would soon be implicated, dropped out of sight, but several of his officers were arrested. Zawahiri inexplicably stayed put.

The evidence gathered in these arrests alerted government officials to a new threat from the Islamist underground. That September, Sadat ordered a roundup of more than fifteen hundred people, including many prominent Egyptians—not only Islamists but also intellectuals with no religious leanings, Marxists, Coptic Christians, student leaders, and various journalists and writers. The dragnet missed Zawahiri but captured most of the other Islamic Jihad leaders. However, a military cell within the scattered ranks of Jihad had already set in motion a hastily conceived plan: a young Army recruit, Lieutenant Khaled Islambouli, had offered to kill Sadat during an appearance at a military parade.

Zawahiri later testified that he did not learn of the plan until nine o'clock on the morning of October 6, 1981, a few hours before it was scheduled to be carried out. One of the members of his cell, a pharmacist, brought him the news at his clinic. "In fact, I was astonished and shaken," Zawahiri told interrogators. In his opinion, the action had not been properly thought through. The pharmacist proposed that they do something to help the plan succeed. "But I told him, 'What can we do?' " Zawahiri told the interrogators. He said that he felt it was hopeless to try to aid the conspirators. "Do they want us to shoot up the streets and let the police detain us? We are not going to do anything." Zawahiri went back to his patient. When he learned, a few hours later, that the military exhibition was still in progress, he assumed that the operation had failed and that everyone connected with it had been arrested.

The parade commemorated the eighth anniversary of the 1973 war. Surrounded by dignitaries, including several American diplomats, President Sadat was saluting the troops when a military vehicle veered toward the reviewing stand. Lieutenant Islambouli and three other conspirators leaped out and tossed grenades into the stand. "I have killed the Pharaoh!" Islambouli cried, after emptying the cartridge of his machine gun into the President, who stood defiantly at attention until his body was riddled with bullets.

It is still unclear why Zawahiri did not leave Egypt when the new government, headed by Hosni Mubarak, rounded up seven hundred suspected conspirators. In any event, at the end of October Zawahiri packed his belongings for another trip to Pakistan. He went to the house of some relatives to say goodbye. His brother Hussein was driving him to the airport when the police stopped them on the Nile Corniche. "They took Ayman to the Maadi police station, and he was surrounded by guards," Omar Azzam told me. "The chief of police slapped him in the face—and Ayman slapped him back!" Omar and his father, Mahfouz, recall this incident with amazement, not only because of the recklessness of Zawahiri's response but also because until that moment they had never seen him resort to violence. After his arrest and imprisonment, Zawahiri became known as the man who struck back.

V—THE PRISONER

In the twelfth century, the great Kurdish conqueror Saladin built the Citadel, a fortress on a hill above Cairo, using the labor of captured Crusaders. For seven hundred years, the fortress served as the seat of government; the structure also contained several mosques and a prison. "When the security forces brought people here, they took off their clothes, handcuffed them, blindfolded them, then started beating them with sticks and slapping them on the face," the Islamist attorney Montasser al-Zayat, who was imprisoned with Zawahiri, told me. (He wrote a damning biography of his former friend and colleague, "Ayman al-Zawahiri as I Knew Him," which was published in Cairo earlier this year. Under pressure from Zawahiri's supporters, the publisher stopped printing it in July.) "Ayman was beaten all the time—every day," Zayat said. "They sensed that he had a lot of significant information."

Jolly and devious, Zayat is an appealingly slippery figure. He has a large belly, and he always wears a coat and tie, even in the Cairo heat. In the fundamentalist style, he keeps his hair cropped close and his beard long and untrimmed. For years, he has been the main source for information about Zawahiri and the Islamist movement, in both the Egyptian and the Western press. As we walked through the old prison, which is now part of the Police Museum, Zayat talked about his time there and recalled hearing the voices of tourists, who were always just outside the prison walls. He pointed to the stone cell where Zawahiri was held—an enclosure of perhaps four feet by eight. "I didn't know him before we were brought here, but we were able to talk through a hole between our cells," Zayat said. "We discussed why the operations failed. He told me that he hadn't wanted the assassination to take place. He thought they should have waited and plucked the regime from the roots through a military coup. He was not that bloodthirsty."

Zayat, among other witnesses, maintains that the traumatic experiences suffered by Zawahiri during his three years in prison transformed him from a relative moderate in the Islamist underground into a violent extremist. They point to what happened to his relationship with Isam al-Qamari, who had been his close friend and a man he greatly admired. Immediately after Zawahiri's arrest, officials in the Interior Ministry began grilling him about Qamari's whereabouts. In their relentless search for Qamari, they threw the Zawahiri family out of their house, then tore up the floors and pulled down the wallpaper looking for evidence. They also waited by the phone to see if Qamari would call. "They waited for two weeks," Omar Azzam told me. Finally, a call came. The caller identified himself as "Dr. Isam," and asked to meet Zawahiri. A police officer, pretending to be a family member, told "Dr. Isam" that Zawahiri was not there. According to Azzam, the caller suggested, " 'Have Ayman pray the *magreb'* "—the sunset prayer—" 'with me.' And he named a mosque where they should meet."

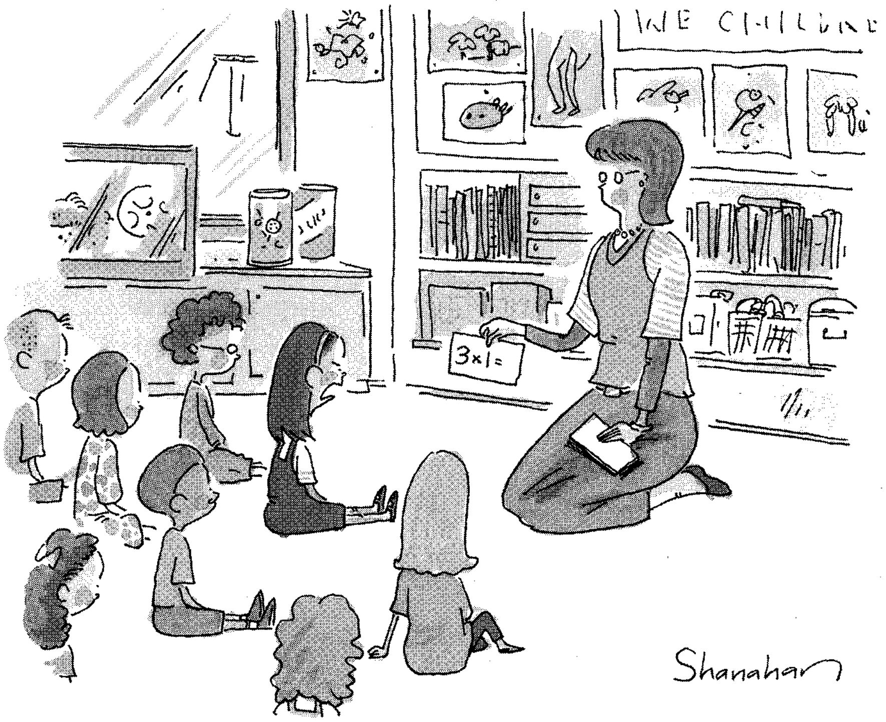
The head of the Interior Ministry's anti-terrorism unit at the time, Fouad Allam, supervised the hunt for Qamari. An avuncular figure with a booming voice, he has interrogated almost every major Islamic radical since 1965, when he interrogated Sayyid Qutb. I asked Allam about Zawahiri's manner when he talked to him. "Shy and distant," he said. "He didn't look at you when he talked, which is a sign of politeness in the Arab world."

Under interrogation, Zawahiri admitted that "Dr. Isam" was actually Qamari, and he also confirmed that Qamari had supplied him with weapons. Qamari was still unaware that Zawahiri was in custody when he called the Zawahiri home and made a date for the two of them to meet at the Zawya Mosque in Embaba. The police arrested Qamari when he arrived at the mosque. In Zawahiri's memoir, the closest he comes to confessing this betrayal is an oblique reference to the "humiliation" of imprisonment: "The toughest thing about captivity is forcing the mujahid, under the force of torture, to confess about his colleagues, to destroy his movement with his own hands, and offer his and his colleagues' secrets to the enemy." Qamari was given a ten-year sentence. "He received the news with his unique calmness and self-composure," Zawahiri recalls. "He even tried to comfort me, and said, 'I pity you for the burdens you will have to carry.' " Perversely, after Zawahiri testified against Qamari and thirteen others, the authorities placed the two of them in the same cell. Qamari was later killed in a shootout with the police after escaping from prison.

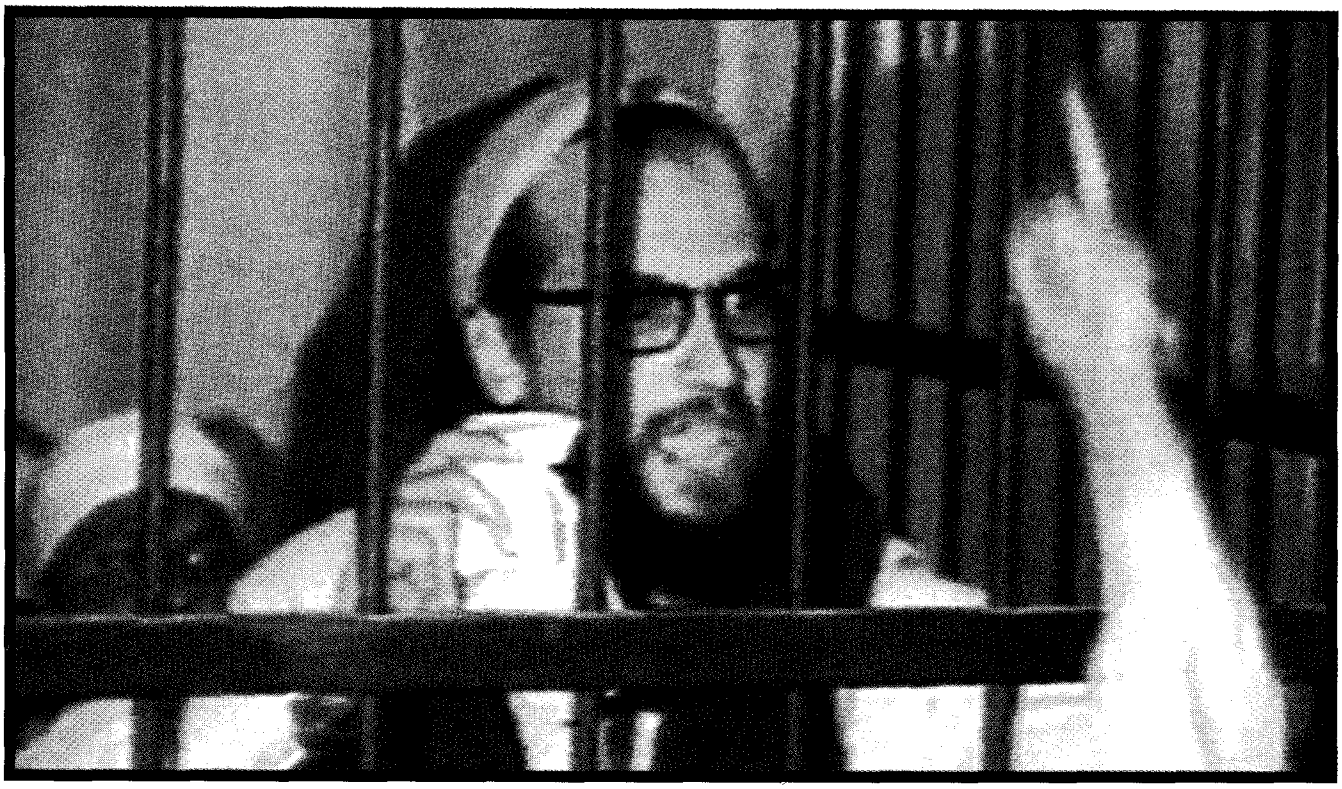
Zawahiri was defendant No. 113 of more than three hundred militants accused of aiding in the assassination of Sadat, and of various other crimes as well—in Zawahiri's case, possession of a gun. Nearly every notable Islamist in Egypt was implicated in the plot. (Zawahiri's brother Mohammed was sentenced in absentia, but the charges were later dropped. The youngest brother, Hussein, spent thirteen months in prison before the charges against him were dropped. Lieutenant Islambouli and twenty-three others were tried separately, and five of them, including Islambouli, were executed.) The defendants, some of whom were adolescents, were kept in a zoolike cage that ran across one side of a vast improvised courtroom set up in the Exhibition Grounds in Cairo, where fairs and conventions are often held. International news organizations covered the trial, and Zawahiri, who had the best command of English among the defendants, was designated as their spokesman.

Video footage that was shot during the opening day of the trial, December 4, 1982, shows the three hundred defendants, illuminated by the lights of TV cameras, chanting, praying, and calling out desperately to family members. Finally, the camera settles on Zawahiri, who stands apart from the chaos with a look of solemn, focussed intensity. Thirty-one years old, he is wearing a white robe and has a gray scarf thrown over his shoulder.

At a signal, the other prisoners fall silent, and Zawahiri cries out, "Now we want to speak to the whole world! Who are we? Who are we? Why they bring us here, and what we want to say? About the first question, we are Muslims! We are Muslims who believe in their religion! We are Muslims who believe in their religion, both in ideology and practice, and hence we tried our best to establish



"Who dealt this mess?"



ABC NEWS/WORLD NEWS TONIGHT

an Islamic state and an Islamic society!"

The other defendants chant, in Arabic, "There is no god but God!"

Zawahiri continues, in a fiercely repetitive cadence, "We are not sorry, we are not sorry for what we have done for our religion, and we have sacrificed, and we stand ready to make more sacrifices!"

The others shout, "There is no god but God!"

Zawahiri continues, "We are here—the real Islamic front and the real Islamic opposition against Zionism, Communism, and imperialism!" He pauses, then: "And now, as an answer to the second question, Why did they bring us here? They bring us here for two reasons! First, they are trying to abolish the outstanding Islamic movement . . . and, secondly, to complete the conspiracy of evacuating the area in preparation for the Zionist infiltration."

The others cry out, "We will not sacrifice the blood of the Muslims for the Americans and the Jews!"

The prisoners pull off their shoes and raise their robes to expose the marks of torture. Zawahiri talks about the torture that took place in the "dirty Egyptian jails . . . where we suffered the severest inhuman treatment. There they kicked us, they beat us, they whipped us with electric cables, they shocked us with electricity! They shocked us with electricity! And they used the wild dogs! And they used the wild dogs! And they hung us over the edges of the doors"—here he bends over to demonstrate—"with our hands tied at the back! They arrested the wives, the mothers, the fathers, the sisters, and the sons!"

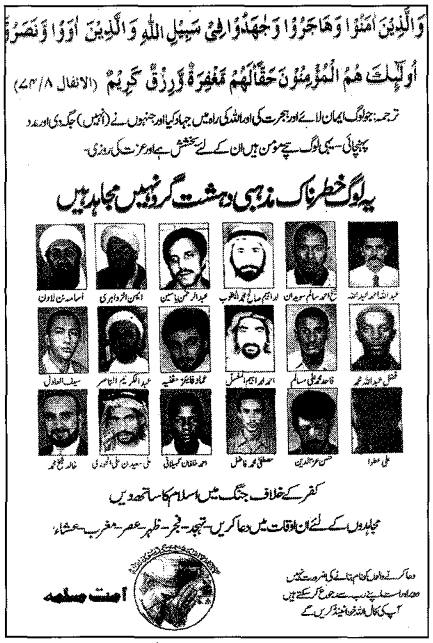
The defendants chant, "The army of Muhammad will return, and we will defeat the Jews!"

The camera captures one particularly wild-eyed defendant in a green caftan as he extends his arms through the bars of the cage, screams, and then faints into the arms of a fellow-prisoner. Zawahiri calls out the names of several prisoners who, he says, died as a result of torture. "So where is democracy?" he shouts. "Where is freedom? Where is human rights? Where is justice? Where is justice? We will never forget! We will never forget!"

Fouad Allam, the former anti-terrorism chief, maintains that none of the prisoners were tortured. "It's all a legend," he told me—one designed to discredit the regime and enhance the standing of the Islamists. But Kamal Habib, who spent ten years in Egyptian prisons, and whose hands are spotted with scars from cigarette burns, maintains that Zawahiri's tales of torture are true. "The higher you were in the organization, the more you were tortured," he told me. "Ayman knew a number of the military officers who were directly involved in the assassination. He was subjected to severe torture."

Zawahiri later testified in a case brought by former prisoners against the intelligence unit that conducted the prison interrogations. His allegations of torture were substantiated by forensic medical reports, which noted evidence of six injuries from assaults with "a solid instrument." He was also supported by the testimony of one of the intelligence officers, who said that he had seen Zawahiri, "his head shaved, his dignity completely humiliated, undergoing all sorts of torture." The officer went on to say that he had been in the interrogation room when another prisoner was brought in. The officers demanded that Zawahiri confess to complicity in the assassination plot in front of his fellow-conspirator. When the prisoner said, "How can you expect him to confess when he knows that the penalty is death?" Zawahiri reportedly replied, "The death penalty is more merciful than torture."

While Zawahiri was in prison, he came face to face with Egypt's best-known Islamist, Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, who had also been charged as a conspirator in the assassination of Sadat. A strange and forceful man, blinded by diabetes in childhood and blessed with a stirring, resonant voice, Rahman had risen in Islamist circles because of his



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ترجمہ: جو لوگ ایمان لائے اور ہجرت کی اور اللہ کی راہ میں جہاد کیا اور جنہوں نے (انہیں) جگہ دی اور مدد
پہنچائی۔ یہی لوگ سچے مومن ہیں ان کے لئے بخشش ہے اور عزت کی روزی۔

یہ لوگ خطرناک مذہبی دہشت گرد نہیں مجاہد ہیں

عبداللہ احمد عبداللہ، شیخ احمد سالم سویدان، ابراہیم صالح محمد الیعقوب، عبدالرحمن یاسین، ایمن الظواہری، اسامہ بن لادن

فضل عبداللہ محمد، فاحد محمد علی سالم، احمد ابراہیم المغسل، عماد فائز مغنیہ، عبدالکریم الناصر، سیف العادل

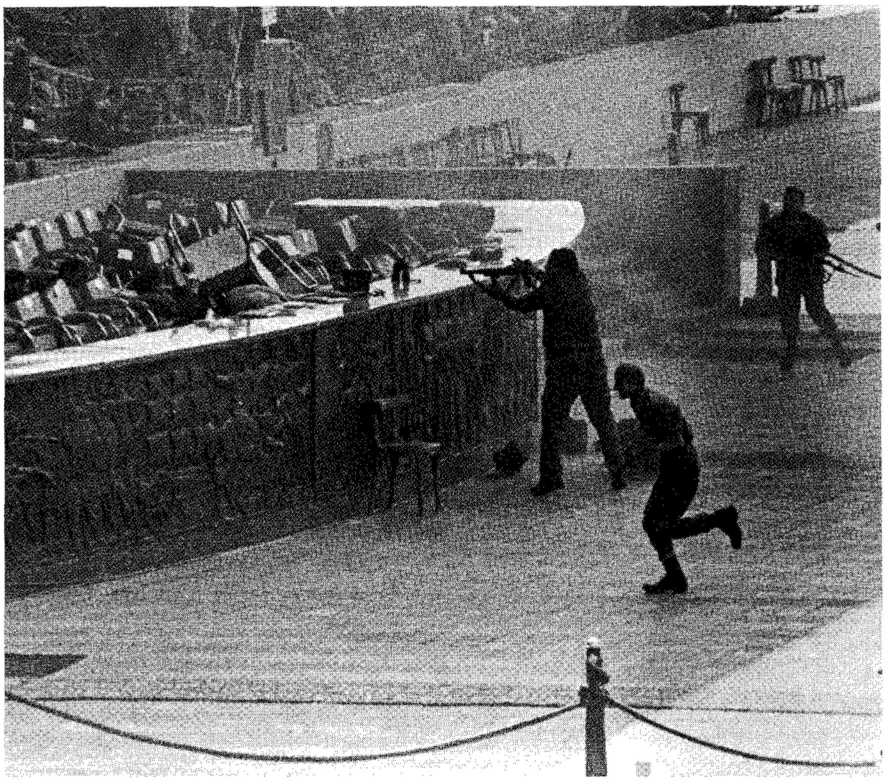
علی عطوہ، حسن عزالدین، مصطفیٰ محمد فاضل، احمد خلفان گیلانی، علی سعید بن علی الحوری، خالد شیخ محمد

کفر کے خلاف جنگ میں اسلام کا ساتھ دیں

مجاہدوں کے لئے ان اوقات میں دعا کریں۔ تہجد۔ فجر۔ ظہر۔ عصر۔ مغرب۔ عشاء

دعا کرنے والوں کو نام بتانے کی ضرورت نہیں
وہ براہ راست اپنے رب سے رجوع کر سکتے ہیں
آپ کی کال اللہ خود اٹینڈ کریں گے

امت مسلمہ



After Sadat's assassination (right), in 1981, Zawahiri (left) was arrested and tried. Above: a tribute to the "warriors of Islam" in a Pakistani newspaper.

LEFT: DAILY UMMAT/ASSOCIATED PRESS; RIGHT: NAKRAM-AL AKHBAR/GETTY IMAGES

eloquent denunciations of Nasser. After Nasser's death, Rahman's influence grew, especially in Upper Egypt, where he taught theology at the Asyut branch of Al-Azhar University and developed a loyal following among Islamist students. He became a spiritual adviser to Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, the Islamic Group, which was then on its way to becoming the largest student association in the country. Some of the young Islamists were financing their activism by shaking down shopkeepers and small-business owners, many of whom were Christians. The theology of jihad requires a fatwa—a religious ruling—to justify actions that would otherwise be considered criminal. Sheikh Omar obligingly issued fatwas that allowed attacks on Christians and the plunder of jewelry stores, on the justification that a state of war existed between Christians and Muslims.

After Sadat began rounding up fundamentalists in the mid-seventies, Rahman travelled to Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries, where he found a number of wealthy sponsors for his cause. In 1980, he returned to Egypt as both the spiritual adviser and the emir of the Islamic Group. In one of his first fatwas, he decreed that a heretical leader deserved to be killed by the faithful. At his trial for conspiring in the assassination of Sadat, his lawyer successfully convinced the court that, because his client had not mentioned the Egyptian President by name he was, at most, tangential to the plot. Six months after Rahman's arrest, he was released.

Although the members of the two leading militant organizations, the Islamic Group and Islamic Jihad, shared the common goal of bringing down the Sadat government, they differed sharply in their ideology and their tactics. Sheikh Rahman preached that all humanity could embrace Islam, and he was happy to spread this message. Zawahiri profoundly disagreed. Distrustful of the masses and contemptuous of any faith other than his own stark version of Islam, he preferred to act secretly and unilaterally, until the moment his group could seize power and impose its totalitarian religious vision.

In the Cairo prison, members of the two groups had heated debates about the best way to achieve a true Islamic revolution, and they quarrelled endlessly over who was the best man to lead it. In one argument, according to Montasser al-Zayat, Zawahiri pointed out that Sharia states that the emir cannot be blind. Rahman countered that Sharia also decrees that a prisoner cannot be emir. The rivalry between the two men became extreme. Zayat claims that he tried to persuade Zawahiri to moderate his attacks on Rahman, but Zawahiri refused to back down.

Zawahiri was released in 1984, a hardened radical. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, the American University sociologist, spoke with Zawahiri after his release, and noted that he may have had an overwhelming desire for revenge. "Torture does have that effect on people," he told me. "Many who turn fanatic have suffered harsh treatment in prison. It also makes them extremely suspicious." Torture had other, unanticipated effects on these extremely religious men. Many of them said that after being tortured they had had visions of being welcomed by saints into Paradise and of the just Islamic society that had been made possible by their martyrdom.

Ibrahim had done a study of political prisoners in Egypt in the nineteen-seventies. According to his research, most of the Islamist recruits were young men from villages who had come to one of the cities for schooling. The majority were the sons of middle-level government bureaucrats. They were ambitious and tended to be drawn to the fields of science and engineering, which accept only the most qualified students. They were not the alienated, marginalized youth that a sociologist might have expected. Instead, Ibrahim wrote, they were "model young Egyptians." Ibrahim attributed the recruiting success of the militant Islamist groups to their emphasis on brotherhood, sharing, and spiritual support, which provided a "soft landing" for the rural migrants to the city.

Zawahiri, who had read the study in prison, disagreed, Ibrahim told me. In their conversation, Zawahiri said to him, "You have trivialized our movement by your mundane analysis. May God have mercy on you."

Zawahiri decided to leave Egypt, worried, perhaps, about the political consequences of his testimony in the case against the intelligence unit. According to his sister Heba, who is a professor of oncology at the National Cancer Institute at Cairo University, he thought of applying for a surgery fellowship in England. Instead, he arranged to work at a medical clinic in Jidda, Saudi Arabia. At the Cairo airport, he ran into his friend Abdallah Schleifer. "Where are you going?" Schleifer asked.

"Saudi," said Zawahiri, who appeared relaxed and happy.

The two men embraced. "Listen, Ayman," Schleifer said. "Stay out of politics."

"I will," Zawahiri replied. "I will!"

VI—COURTING BIN LADEN

Zawahiri arrived in Jidda in 1985. At thirty-four, he was a formidable figure. He had been a committed revolutionary and a member of an Islamist underground cell for more than half his life. His political skills had been honed by prison debates, and he had discovered in himself a capacity—and a hunger—for leadership. He was pious, determined, and embittered.

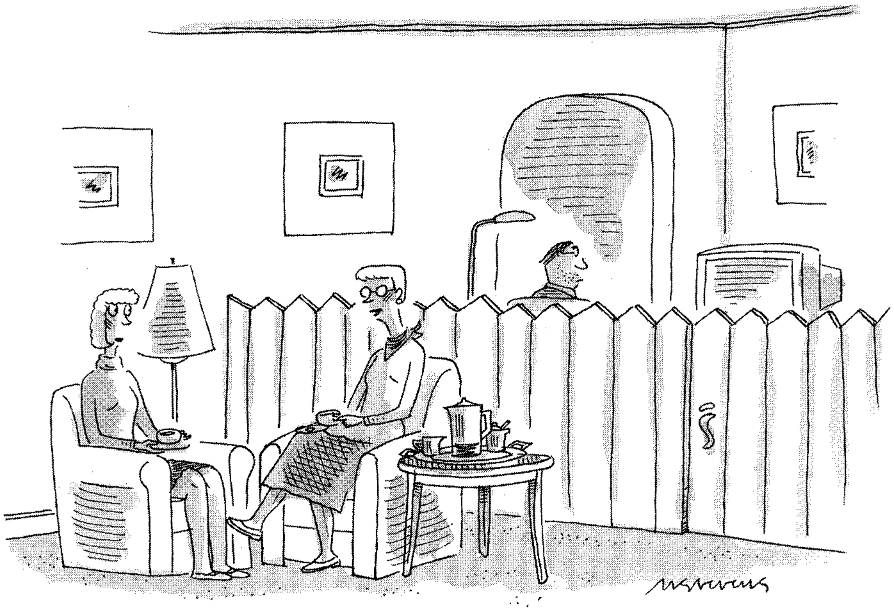
Osama bin Laden, who was based in Jidda, was twenty-eight and had lived a life of boundless wealth and pleasure. His family's company, the multinational and broadly diversified Saudi Binladin Group, was one of the largest companies in the Middle East. Osama was a wan and gangly young man—he is estimated to be six feet five inches—and was by no means perceived to be the charismatic leader he would eventually become. He lacked the underground experience that Zawahiri had and, apart from his religious devotion, had few settled beliefs. But he had been radicalized by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and he had already raised hundreds of millions of dollars for the mujahideen resistance.

"He's becoming insufferably 'More transparent than thou.'"

"You have the desert-rooted streak of bin Laden coming together with the more modern Zawahiri," Saad Eddin Ibrahim observes. "But they were both politically disenfranchised, despite their backgrounds. There was something that resonated between these two youngsters on the neutral ground of faraway Afghanistan. There they tried to build the heavenly kingdom that they could not build in their home countries."

In the mid-eighties, the dominant Arab in the war against the Soviets was Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian theologian who had a doctorate in Islamic law from Al-Azhar University. (He is not related to the Azzam family of Zawahiri's mother.) Azzam went on to teach at King Abdul Aziz University, in Jidda, where one of his students was Osama bin Laden. As soon as Azzam heard about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, he moved to Pakistan. He became the gatekeeper of jihad and its main fund-raiser. His formula for victory was "Jihad and the rifle alone: no negotiations, no conferences, and no dialogues."

Many of the qualities that people now attribute to bin Laden were seen earlier in Abdullah Azzam, who became his mentor. Azzam was the embodiment of the holy warrior, which, in the Muslim world, is as popular a heroic stereotype as the samurai in Japan or the Hollywood cowboy in America. His long beard was vividly black in the middle and white on either side, and whenever he talked about the war his gaze seemed to focus on some glorious interior vision. "I reached Afghanistan and could not believe my eyes," Azzam says in a recruitment video, produced in 1988, as he holds an AK-47 rifle in his lap. "I travelled to acquaint people with jihad for years. . . . We were trying to satisfy the thirst for martyrdom. We are still in love



"Good fences make good marriages."

with this." Azzam was a frequent speaker at Muslim rallies, even in the United States, where he came to raise money, and he often appeared on Saudi television. Generous and elaborately polite, Azzam opened his home in Peshawar to many of the young men, mostly Arabs, who had heeded his fatwa for all Muslims to rally against the Soviet invader. When bin Laden first came to Peshawar, he stayed at Azzam's guesthouse. Together, they set up the Maktab al-Khadamat, or Services Bureau, to recruit and train resistance fighters.

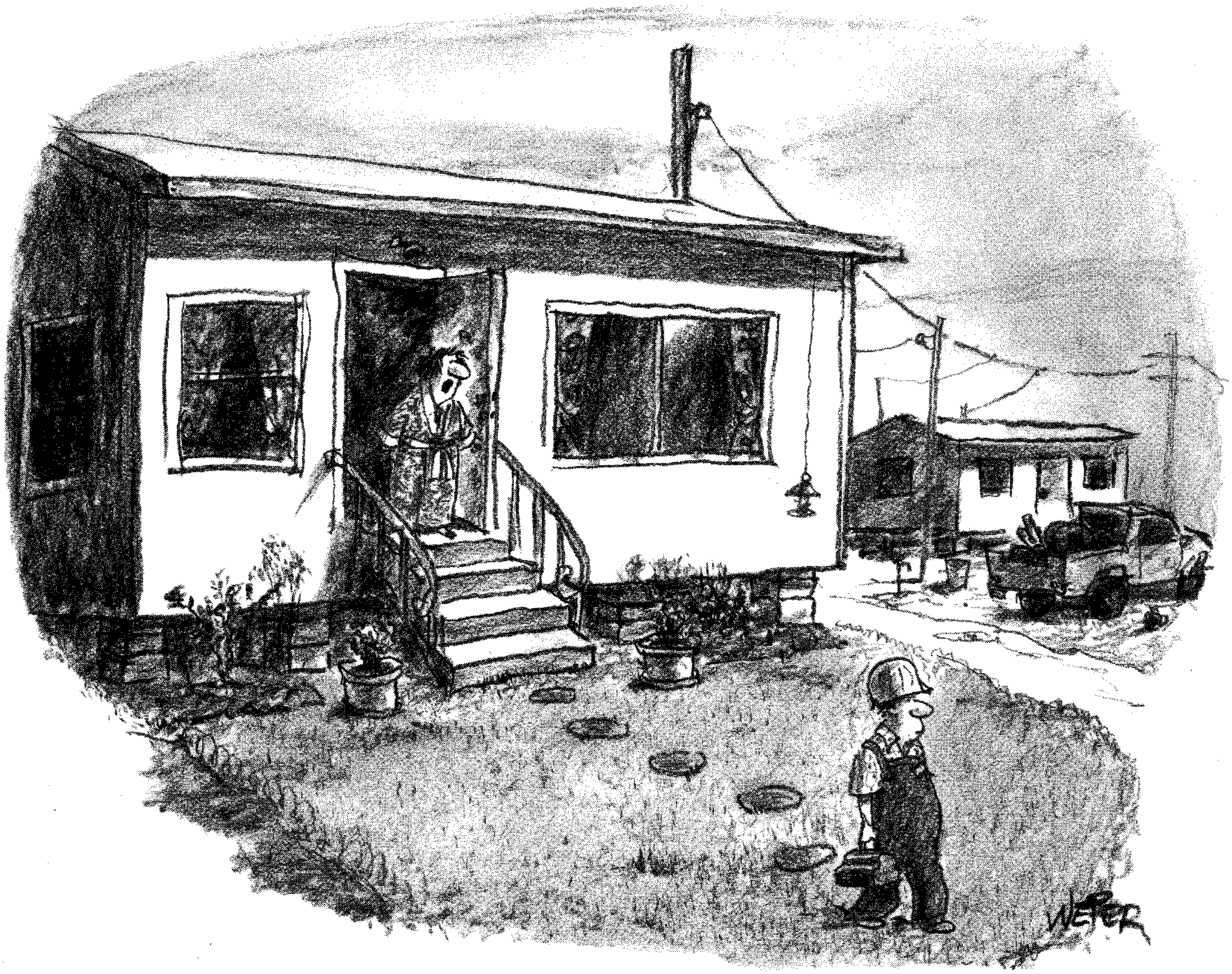
Peshawar had changed in the five years since Zawahiri had last been there. The city was congested and rife with corruption. Camels contended in the narrow streets with armored vehicles, pickups with oversized wheels, and late-model luxury cars. As many as two million refugees had flooded into the North-West Frontier Province, turning Peshawar, the capital, into the prime staging area for the resistance. The United States was contributing approximately two hundred and fifty million dollars a year to the war, and the Pakistani intelligence service was distributing arms to the numerous Afghan warlords, who all maintained offices in Peshawar. A new stream of American and Pakistani military advisers had arrived to train the mujahideen. Aid workers and free-lance mullahs and intelligence agents from around the world had set up shop. "Peshawar was transformed into this place where whoever had no place to go went," says Osama Rushdi, a former emir in a university branch of the Islamic Group, who is now a political refugee in Holland. "It was an environment in which a person could go from a bad place to a worse place, and eventually into despair."

Across the Khyber Pass was the war. Many of the young Arabs who came to Peshawar prayed that their crossing would lead them to martyrdom and then to Paradise. Many were political fugitives from their own countries, and, as stateless people, they naturally turned against the very idea of a state. They saw themselves as a great borderless posse whose mission was to defend the entire Muslim people.

This army of so-called Afghan Arabs soon became legendary throughout the Islamic world. Some experts have estimated that as many as fifty thousand Arabs passed through Afghanistan during the war against the Soviets. However, Abdullah Anas, an Algerian mujahid who married one of Abdullah Azzam's daughters, says that there were never more than three thousand Arabs in Afghanistan, and that most of them were drivers, secretaries, and cooks, not warriors. The war was fought almost entirely by the Afghans, not the Arabs, he told me. According to Hany al-Sibai, an alleged leader of Jihad (he denies it) now living in exile, there were only some five hundred Egyptians. "They were known as the thinkers and the brains," Sibai said. "The Islamist movement started with them."

Zawahiri's brother Mohammed, who had loyally followed him since childhood, joined him in Peshawar. The brothers had a strong family resemblance, though Mohammed was slightly taller and thinner than Ayman. Another colleague from the underground days in Cairo, a physician named Sayyid Imam, arrived, and in 1987, according to Egyptian intelligence, the three men reorganized Islamic Jihad. They began recruiting new members from the Egyptian mujahideen. Before long, representatives of the Islamic Group appeared on the scene, and once again the old rivalry flared up. Osama Rushdi, who had known Zawahiri in prison, told me that he was shocked by the changes he found in him. In Egypt, Zawahiri had struck him as polite and modest. "Now he was very antagonistic toward others," Rushdi recalled. "He talked badly about the other groups and wrote books against them. In discussions, he started to take things in a weird way. He would have strong opinions without any sense of logic."

Zawahiri's wife, Azza, set up house in Peshawar. Azza's mother, Nabila Galal, says that she visited her daughter in Pakistan three times, the last time in 1990. "They were an unusually close family and always moved together as one unit," she told a reporter for the Egyptian magazine *Akher Saa* in December, 2001. While Zawahiri was in prison after the assassination of Sadat, Nabila took care of Azza and her first child, Fatima, who was born in 1981. She visited Azza again a few years later, in Saudi Arabia, to attend the birth of Umayma, who was named after Zawahiri's mother. "One day, I got a letter from Azza, and I felt intense pain as I read the words," Nabila recalled. "She wrote that she was to travel to Pakistan with her husband. I wished that she would not go there, but I knew that nobody can prevent fate. She was well aware of the rights her husband held over her and her duty toward him, which is why she was to fol-



"Carpe diem."

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low him to the ends of the earth." In Pakistan, Azza gave birth to another daughter, Nabila, in 1986. A fourth daughter, Khadiga, arrived the following year, and in 1988 the Zawahiris' only son, Mohammed, was born. Nearly ten years later, in 1997, another daughter, Aisha, arrived. "Azza and her family lived a good life in Peshawar," her brother Essam told me. "They had a two-story villa with three or four bedrooms upstairs. One of the rooms was always available for visitors—and they had a lot of visitors. If they had money left over, they gave it to the needy. They were happy with very little."

Unlike the other leaders of the mujahideen, Zawahiri did not pledge himself to Sheikh Abdullah Azzam when he arrived in Afghanistan; from the start, he concentrated his efforts on getting close to bin Laden. He soon succeeded in placing trusted members of Islamic Jihad in key positions around bin Laden. According to the Islamist attorney Montasser al-Zayat, "Zawahiri completely controlled bin Laden. The largest share of bin Laden's financial support went to Zawahiri and the Jihad organization, while he supported the Islamic Group only with tiny morsels."

Zawahiri must have recognized—perhaps even before bin Laden himself did—that the future of the Islamic movement lay with "this heaven-sent man," as Abdullah Azzam called bin Laden. Azzam soon felt the gravitational force of Zawahiri's influence over his protégé. "I don't know what some people are doing here in Peshawar," Azzam complained to his son-in-law Abdullah Anas. "They are talking against the mujahideen. They have only one point, to create *fitna*"—discord—"between me and these volunteers." He singled out Zawahiri as one of the troublemakers.

The Egyptian filmmaker Essam Deraz, who worked in Afghanistan between 1986 and 1988, received special permission to visit the mujahideen's main base camp in a complex of caves in the Hindu Kush mountains known as Masaada (the Lion's Den). "It was snowing when we arrived at the Lion's Den," Deraz told me. "The Arabs hated anybody with cameras, because of their concern for security, so they stopped me from entering the cave. I was with my crew, and we were standing outside in the snow until I couldn't move my legs. Finally, one of the Arabs said that I could come in but my crew must stay out. I said, 'Either we all come in or we all stay out.' They disappeared and came back with Dr. Abdel Mu'iz." (The name was Zawahiri's nom de guerre. In Arabic, Abdel means "slave," and Mu'iz, one of the ninety-nine names of God, means "bestower of honor.") The man who called himself Dr. Abdel Mu'iz insisted that Deraz and his crew come into the cave, where he served them tea and bread. "He was very polite and very refined," Deraz said. "I could tell that he was from a good background by the way he apologized for keeping us outside." That night, Deraz slept on the floor of the cave, next to Zawahiri.

Deraz observed that bin Laden had become dependent on Zawahiri's medical care. "Bin Laden had low blood pressure, and sometimes he would get dizzy and have to lie down," Deraz told me. "Ayman came from Peshawar to treat him. He would give him a checkup and then leave to go fight." Deraz recalls that, during one of the most intense battles of the war, he and the two men were huddled in a cave near Jalalabad with a group of fighters. "The bombing was very heavy," Deraz said. "Bin Laden had his arm stretched out, and Zawahiri was preparing to give him glucose. Whenever the doctor was about to insert the needle, there was a bombing and we would all hit the ground. When the bombing stopped for a while, Zawahiri got up and set up the glucose stand, but as soon as he picked up the bottle there would be another bombing. So one person said, 'Don't you see? Every time you pick up the bottle, we are bombed.' And another said, 'In Islam, it is forbidden to be pessimistic,' but then it happened again. So the pessimistic one got up very slowly and threw the glucose bottle out of the cave. We all laughed. Even bin Laden was laughing."

Bin Laden's final break with Abdullah Azzam came in a dispute over the scope of jihad. Bin Laden envisioned an all-Arab legion, which eventually could be used to wage jihad in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Sheikh Abdullah strongly opposed making war against fellow-Muslims. Zawahiri undermined Azzam's position by spreading rumors that he was a spy. "Zawahiri said he believed that Abdullah Azzam was working for the Americans," Osama Rushdi told me. "Sheikh Abdullah was killed that same night." On November 24, 1989, Azzam and two of his sons were blown up by a car bomb as they were driving to a mosque in Peshawar. Although no one has claimed credit for the killings, many have been blamed, including Zawahiri himself, and even bin Laden. At Azzam's funeral, Zawahiri delivered a eulogy.

VII—IN SILICON VALLEY

In 1989, after ten years of warfare, the Soviets gave up and pulled their forces out of Afghanistan. More than a million Afghans—eight per cent of the country's population—had been killed, and hundreds of thousands had been maimed. Out of some thirteen million Afghans who survived the war, almost half were refugees. And yet the war against the Soviets was only the beginning of the Afghan tragedy.

After the Soviet pullout, many of the Afghan Arabs returned home or went to other countries, carrying the torch of Islamic revolution. In the Balkans, ethnic hostility among Muslims, Croats, and Serbs prompted Bosnia-Herzegovina to vote to secede from Yugoslavia; that set off a three-year war in which a hundred and fifty thousand people died. In November of 1991, the largely Muslim region of Chechnya declared its independence from Russia—an act that soon led to war. In 1992, civil war broke out in Algeria when the government cancelled elections to prevent the Islamist party from taking power; after a decade of fighting, the conflict has taken a hundred thousand lives. In Egypt, the Islamic Group launched a campaign against tourism and Western culture in general, burning and bombing theatres, bookstores, and banks, and killing Christians. "We believe in the principle of establishing Sharia, even if this means the death of all mankind," one of the Group's leaders later explained. And the war in Afghanistan continued, only now it was Muslims fighting Muslims for political control.

The Arabs who remained in Afghanistan were confronted with the question of jihad's future. Toward the end of 1989, a meeting took place in the Afghan town of Khost at a mujahideen camp. A Sudanese fighter named Jamal al-Fadl was among the participants, and he later testified about the event in a New York courtroom during one of the trials connected with the 1998 bombing of the American embassies in East Africa. According to Fadl, the meeting was attended by ten men—four or five of them Egyptians, including Zawahiri. Fadl told the court that the chairman of the meeting, an Iraqi known as Abu Ayoub, proposed the formation of a new organization that would wage jihad beyond the borders of Afghanistan. There was some dispute about the name, but ultimately the new organization came to be called Al Qaeda—the Base. The alliance was conceived as a loose affiliation among individual mujahideen and established groups, and was dominated by Egyptian Islamic Jihad. The ultimate boss, however, was Osama bin Laden, who held the checkbook.

In 1989, he returned to Saudi Arabia, ostensibly to work in the family business. The following year, Saddam Hussein ordered the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Bin Laden, who had achieved mythic status in his country because of his role in the Soviet-Afghan war, went to the royal family and offered to defend the Saudi oil fields with his mujahideen companions. The rulers decided to put their faith in an American-led coalition instead, reportedly promising bin Laden that the foreigners would leave as soon as the war was over. But American forces were still in Saudi Arabia a year after the Gulf War ended, and bin Laden felt betrayed. He returned to Afghanistan and began speaking out against the Saudi regime. He also started funding the activities of Saudi dissidents in London.

In 1992, bin Laden abruptly left Kabul for Sudan. He was reportedly in despair over the infighting among the various factions of the mujahideen and convinced that the Saudis were scheming to kill him. He arrived in Khartoum with his three wives and his fifteen children, and devoted himself to breeding Arabian horses and training police dogs. He went into business, investing heavily in Sudanese construction projects, including an airport and the country's main highway; he also bought up the entire crop of Sudanese cotton, and he occasionally picked up the tab for the country's oil imports. In those early days in Khartoum, bin Laden felt secure enough to walk to the mosque five times a day without his bodyguards.

Zawahiri's relatives expected him to return to Egypt; throughout the Soviet-Afghan war and for several years afterward, he continued to pay rent on his clinic in Maadi. But he felt that it was not safe for him to return. Eventually, he followed bin Laden to Sudan. There he placed himself under the protection of the philosopher king of Islamist ideologues, Hassan al-Tourabi, a graduate of the University of London and the Sorbonne, who was instituting Sharia and trying to establish in Sudan the ideal Islamic republic that Zawahiri and bin Laden longed for in their countries. In Khartoum, Zawahiri set about reorganizing Islamic Jihad. Jamal al-Fadl said in his testimony in New York that Zawahiri gave him two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to buy a farm north of the Sudan capital, where members of Jihad could receive military training.

Among the members of Jihad who became a part of the Al Qaeda inner circle was Mohamed Atef (he was also known as Abu Hafs al-Masri). A former policeman, whose daughter eventually married one of bin Laden's sons, Atef was placed in charge of the military wing of Al Qaeda. Another powerful figure was Mohamed Makkawi, whose nom de guerre is Seif al-Adl. He had been a colonel in the Egyptian Army's special forces, and his contentious ambitions for a leadership role in Islamic Jihad were thwarted by an erratic and dangerous personality. A prominent Cairo lawyer who is a member of parliament characterized Makkawi to me as a "psychopath." According to the lawyer, Makkawi suggested in 1987 that Islamic Jihad hijack a passenger jet and crash it into the Egyptian People's Assembly. "I believe he is the father of September 11th," the lawyer said.

One of Zawahiri's most trusted men was in fact a double agent, named Ali Mohamed. Fluent in English, French, and German, as well as Arabic, Mohamed held both Egyptian and American citizenship. From 1986 to 1989, he served in the U.S. Army as a supply sergeant at the Special Warfare School, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he was commended for his exceptional physical fitness. In 1984, Mohamed approached the C.I.A. in Cairo, and after that meeting the agency sent him to Germany. There he made contact with a Hezbollah cell, but apparently he boasted of his C.I.A. connection, and the agency cut him loose. He then began his association with Islamic Jihad. In 1989, he instructed a group of Islamic militants in Brooklyn in basic combat techniques; four years later, some of these militants bombed the World Trade Center. The same year, Mohamed talked to an F.B.I. agent in California and provided American intelligence with its first inside look at Al Qaeda; inexplicably, that interview never found its way to the F.B.I. investigators in New York. In 1994, he travelled to Khartoum to train bin Laden's bodyguards.

DON'T
MESS WITH
CONNECTICUT
DIFFEE

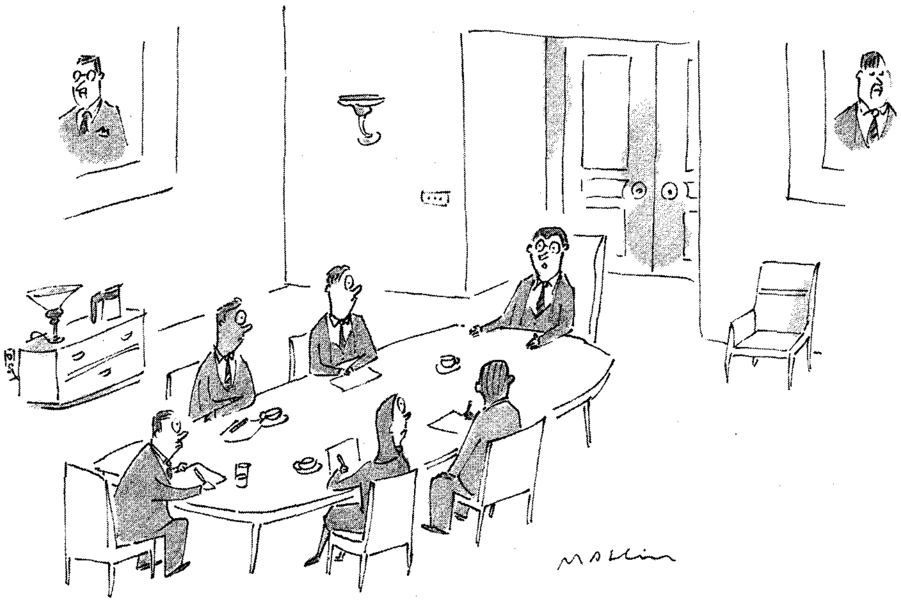
Despite Zawahiri's close ties to bin Laden, money for Jihad was always in short supply. Many of Zawahiri's followers had families, and they all needed food and housing. A few turned to theft and shakedowns to support themselves. Zawahiri strongly disapproved of this; when members of Jihad robbed a German military attaché in Yemen, he investigated the incident and expelled those responsible. But the money problem remained. In the early nineteen-nineties, Zawahiri sent several Jihad members to Albania to work for Muslim charities. They were expected to send ten per cent of their paychecks to Jihad, but it was surely a meagre contribution. Zawahiri bristled at bin Laden's lack of support. "The young men are willing to give up their souls, while the wealthy remain with money," he wrote in the Islamist magazine *Kalimat Haq*. Bin Laden, for his part, was continually frustrated by the conflict between the two principal Egyptian organizations and was increasingly unwilling to fund either of them.

Zawahiri decided to look for money in the world center of venture capitalism—Silicon Valley. He had been to America once before, in 1989, when he paid a recruiting visit to the mujahideen's

Services Bureau branch office in Brooklyn. According to the F.B.I., he returned in the spring of 1993, this time to Santa Clara, California, where he was greeted by Ali Mohamed, the double agent. Mohamed introduced him to Dr. Ali Zaki, a gynecologist and a prominent civic leader in San Jose. Zaki disputes the F.B.I.'s date of the visit, maintaining that Zawahiri's trip to Silicon Valley took place in 1989, a few years after President Reagan compared the mujahideen to America's founding fathers. People at the F.B.I., however, told me that Zawahiri arrived in America shortly after the first bombing of the World Trade Center.

In any event, Zaki claims not to remember much about Zawahiri. "He came as a representative of the Red Crescent of Kuwait," Zaki said. "I was also a physician, so they asked me to accompany him while he was here." He met Zawahiri at the Al-Nur Mosque in Santa Clara after evening prayers, and he escorted him to mosques in Sacramento and Stockton. The two doctors spent most of their time discussing medical problems that Zawahiri encountered in Afghanistan. "We talked about the children and the farmers who were injured and were missing limbs because of all the Russian mines," Zaki recalled. "He was a well-balanced, highly educated physician." But financially the trip was not a success. Zaki says that, at most, the donations produced by these visits to the California mosques amounted to several hundred dollars.

Immediately after this dispiriting trip, Zawahiri began working more closely with bin Laden, and most of the Egyptian members of Islamic Jihad went on the Al Qaeda payroll. These men were not mercenaries; they were highly motivated idealists, many of whom had turned their backs on middle-class careers. Their wages were modest—about a hundred dollars a month for the average fighter, two hundred for a skilled worker. They faced a difficult choice: whether to maintain their allegiance to a bootstrap organization that was always struggling financially or to join forces with a wealthy Saudi who had long-standing ties to the oil billionaires in the Persian Gulf. Moreover, the two organizations had different goals: Islamic Jihad's efforts were still concentrated on Egypt; bin Laden, the businessman, sought to merge all Islamic terrorist groups into a single multinational corporation, with departments devoted to everything from personnel to policymaking. Despite Jihad's financial precariousness, many of its members were suspicious of bin Laden and had no desire to divert their efforts outside Egypt. Zawahiri viewed the alliance as a marriage of convenience. One of his chief assistants, Ahmed al-Najjar, later testified in Cairo that Zawahiri had confided to him that "joining with bin Laden [was] the only solution to keeping the Jihad organization alive."



"If we're going to prioritize, we're going to need some priorities."

VIII—CRACKDOWN IN EGYPT

In 1993, bin Laden dispatched Mohamed Atef to Somalia to look for ways of attacking the American military forces that were participating in an international famine-relief effort. Bin Laden gloried in the fact that his men had trained the Somali militiamen who shot down two American helicopters in the "Black Hawk Down" incident, in October of that year, prompting President Clinton to withdraw all American soldiers from the country. "Based on the reports we received from our brothers in Somalia," bin Laden said, "we learned that they saw the weakness, frailty, and cowardice of U.S. troops. Only eighteen U.S. troops were killed. Nonetheless, they fled in the heart of darkness."

Sudan seemed an ideal spot from which to launch attacks on Egypt. The active coöperation of Sudan's intelligence agency and its military forces provided a safe harbor for the militants. The long, trackless, and almost entirely unguarded border between the two countries facilitated secret movements; and ancient caravan trails provided convenient routes for smuggling weapons and explosives into Egypt on the backs of camels. Iran supplied many of the weapons, and the Iranian-backed terrorist organization Hezbollah provided training in the use of explosives.

Islamic Jihad began its assault on Egypt with an attempt on the life of the Interior Minister, who was leading the crackdown on Islamic militants. In August of 1993, a bomb-laden motorcycle exploded next to the minister's car, killing the bomber and his accomplice. "The minister escaped death, but his arm was broken," Zawahiri writes in his memoir. "A pile of files that he kept next to him saved his life from the shrapnel." The following November, Zawahiri's men tried to kill Egypt's Prime Minister with a car bomb as he was being driven past a girls' school in Cairo. The bomb missed its target, but the explosion injured twenty-one people and killed a twelve-year-old schoolgirl, Shayma Abdel-Halim, who was crushed by a door blown loose in the blast. Her death outraged Egyptians, who had seen more than two hundred and forty people killed by terrorists in the previous two years. As Shayma’s coffin was borne through the streets of Cairo people cried, “Terrorism is the enemy of God!”

Zawahiri was shaken by the popular outrage. “The unintended death of this innocent child pained us all, but we were helpless and we had to fight the government, which was against God’s Sharia and supported God’s enemies,” he notes in his memoir. He offered what amounted to blood money to the girl’s family. The Egyptian government arrested two hundred and eighty of his followers; six were eventually given a sentence of death. Zawahiri writes, “This meant that they wanted my daughter, who was two at the time, and the daughters of other colleagues, to be orphans. Who cried or cared for our daughters?”

Zawahiri was a pioneer in the use of suicide bombers, which became a signature of Jihad assassinations. The strategy broke powerful religious taboos against suicide and the murder of innocents. (For these reasons, the Islamic Group preferred to work with guns and knives.) Although Hezbollah employed truck bombers to attack the American Embassy and the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, such martyrdom operations had not yet worked their way into the modern vocabulary of terror. In Palestine, suicide bombings were virtually unknown until the mid-nineties, when the Oslo accords began to unravel. Another of Zawahiri’s innovations was to tape the bomber’s vows of martyrdom on the eve of the mission.

Obsessed with secrecy, Zawahiri imposed a blind-cell structure on the Jihad organization, so that members in one group would not know the activities or personnel in another. Thus, a security breach in one cell should not compromise other units, and certainly not the entire organization. However, in 1993, Egyptian authorities arrested Jihad’s membership director, Ismail Nassir. “He had a computer containing the entire database,” Osama Rushdi, a former member of the Islamic Group, told me. “Where the member lived, which home he might be hiding in, even what names he uses with false passports.” Supplied with this information, the Egyptian security forces pulled in a thousand suspects and placed more than three hundred of them on trial in military courts on charges of attempting to overthrow the government. The evidence was thin, but, then, the judicial standards weren’t very rigorous. “It was all staged,” Hisham Kassem, the publisher of the Cairo *Times* and the president of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, told me. “The ones you think are dangerous, you hang. The rest, you give them life sentences.” Under Zawahiri’s leadership, Islamic Jihad had succeeded, unintentionally, in assassinating the Speaker of Parliament, in 1990—the intended target was the Interior Minister—and in killing a schoolgirl. In the process, the organization lost almost its entire Egyptian base. If Islamic Jihad was to survive, it would have to be outside Egypt.

During the early nineties, Zawahiri travelled tirelessly, setting up training camps and establishing cells. During this period, he is reported to have visited the Balkans, Austria, Dagestan, Yemen, Iraq, Iran, the Philippines, and even Argentina, often using a false passport. He was particularly engaged by the war in Bosnia, because the country was home to one of the largest Islamic populations in Europe.

Both Jihad and the Islamic Group had been decimated by defections and arrests. The Group’s leader, Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, had emigrated to the United States, and was arrested following the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. He and nine followers were convicted in 1996 of conspiring to destroy New York landmarks, including the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels, the Federal Building, and the United Nations headquarters.

In April of 1995, Zawahiri chaired a meeting in Khartoum attended by the remaining members of the two organizations, along with representatives of other terrorist groups. They agreed on a spectacular act: the assassination of the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak. It was a dangerous bet for the Islamists. The attack was carried out in June in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where Mubarak was on a state visit. There was a shootout between Mubarak’s bodyguards and the assassins; two Ethiopian policemen were killed, but Mubarak escaped unharmed.

The Egyptian government responded with a furious determination to finish off Islamic Jihad. “The security forces used exemplary punishment,” Hisham Kassem told me. “They torched houses in a village because a member of Jihad had come from there. A mother would be stripped naked in front of a guy, who was told, ‘Next time we’ll rape her if your younger brother is not here.’ ” A recently instituted anti-terrorism law had made it a crime even to express sympathy for terrorist movements. Five new prisons were being built to hold political prisoners. (Human-rights organizations estimate the number of Islamists still incarcerated in Egypt at fifteen thousand; Islamists put the figure at sixty thousand. Many of the prisoners have never been charged with any specific crime, and some have simply “disappeared.”)

Zawahiri’s response to the crackdown was to blow up the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. On November 19, 1995, two cars filled with explosives crashed through the embassy gates, killing the bombers and sixteen other people. Sixty were wounded. This act of mass murder was Jihad’s first success under Zawahiri’s administration. “The bomb left the embassy’s ruined building as an eloquent and clear message,” Zawahiri boasts in his memoir.

Zawahiri and bin Laden might have remained in the sanctuary of Sudan had it not been for the determination of the Egyptian and Saudi intelligence services to kill them before they caused any more trouble. (The Saudi government stripped bin Laden of his citizenship in 1994.) He had already survived two attempts on his life. A deranged Islamic extremist, intending to assassinate him, shot up a mosque in Khartoum and was captured as he made his way to bin Laden’s house. On another occasion, a Toyota pickup carrying four Yemeni mercenaries opened fire on bin Laden’s home and his guesthouse, where he had his office. Three of the

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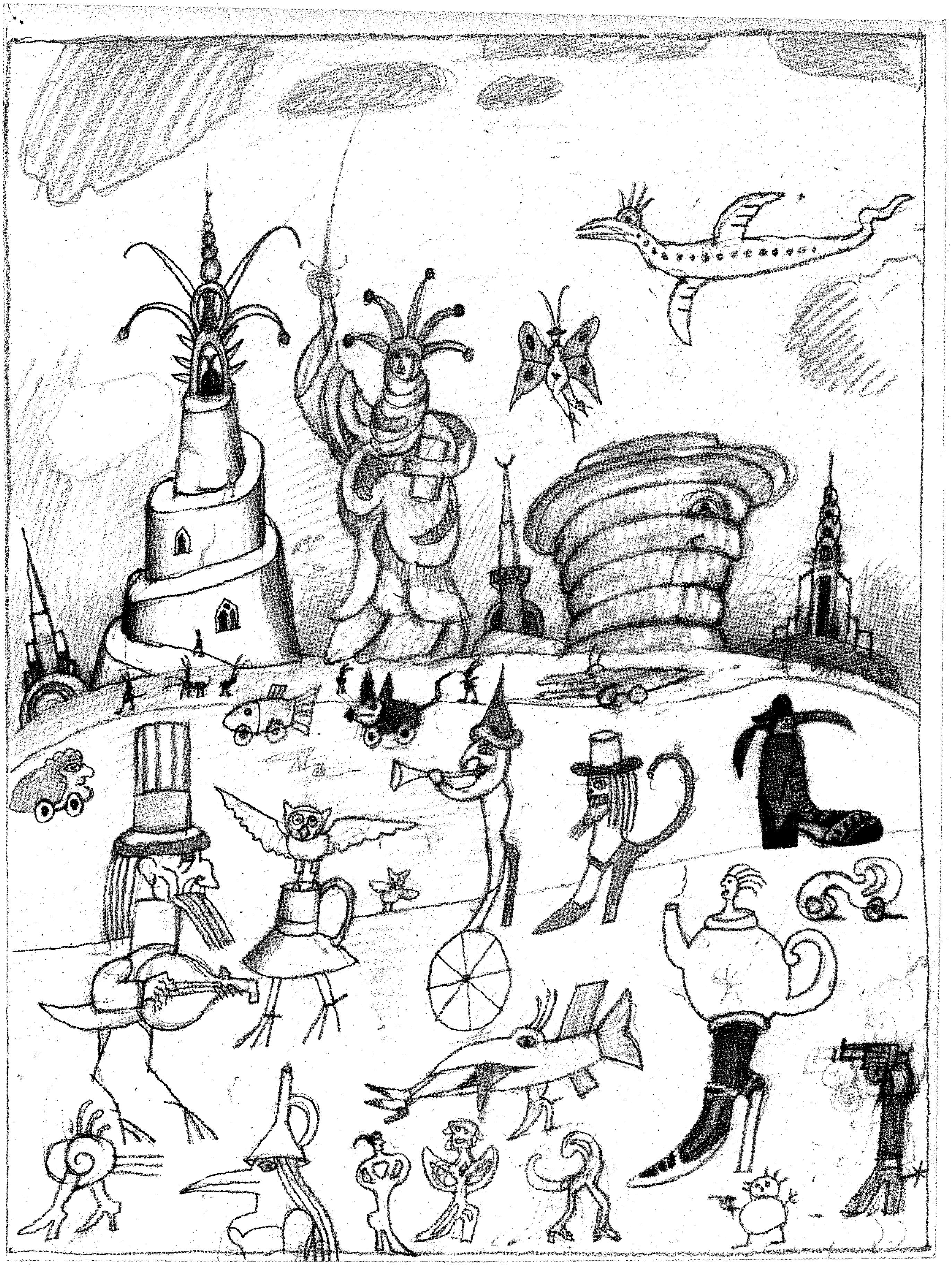
SKETCHBOOK BY SAUL STEINBERG



Yemenis and two of bin Laden's bodyguards were killed in the ensuing gunfight; the other attacker was captured and executed by the Sudanese authorities. Bin Laden, in his sometimes oblique language, told a reporter that he blamed "regimes in our Arabic region" for the assaults. Zawahiri increased bin Laden's security, surrounding him with Egyptian bodyguards. But Zawahiri was also a target.

After the bombing of the embassy in Pakistan, Egyptian intelligence agents devised a fiendish plan. They lured an Egyptian boy, the son of one of bin Laden's accountants, into a room, and drugged and sodomized him, photographing the scene. Yasser al-Sirri, an alleged member of Islamic Jihad who had met Zawahiri in Khartoum, told me that the Egyptian agents blackmailed the boy, who was thirteen or fourteen, into working for them, and then persuaded him to lure another boy into the intelligence network, using the same method of sexual entrapment. The agents taught the boys how to plant microphones in their own homes, a ploy that yielded valuable information, and led to the arrest of Jihad members. The agents gave the accountant's son a suitcase filled with explosives, which he was to leave near a place where Zawahiri was expected to meet some of his colleagues. The plan failed when Sudanese intelligence agents spotted the boy in the company of Egyptian Embassy personnel. They arrested him while he was holding the suitcase.

"The Sudanese captured the other boy and put them both in jail," Hany al-Sibai, who has become a kind of historian of the Islamist movement, told me. "Most of the Islamic groups were in Sudan, so the rumors about the story were huge. The Jihad organization considered the whole thing a scandal for them." Zawahiri went to the Sudanese authorities and asked that the boys be temporarily released from jail so that he could interrogate them. He promised to return them safely. The Sudanese, who were now dependent on bin Laden's financial generosity, agreed. Zawahiri convened an Islamic court, put the boys on trial for treason, convicted them, and had them executed, to make an example of them. In a characteristic gesture, he made a tape of their confessions and had it distributed as a warning to others who might betray the organization. "Many Islamists turned against Zawahiri because of this," Yasser al-Sirri told me.

"I'll have whatever the lads are buying this week."

The Sudanese, furious at Zawahiri's duplicity, and also under intense pressure from the United States and Saudi Arabia to stop harboring terrorists, decided to expel Zawahiri and bin Laden and their followers. According to Hany al-Sibai, the Sudanese did not even give them time to pack. "All we did was to apply God's Sharia," Zawahiri complained. "If we fail to apply it to ourselves, then how can we apply it to others?" Some members of Islamic Jihad proposed that bin Laden undergo plastic surgery and sneak into Egypt, but Zawahiri said that Egypt was too dangerous. In May of 1996, bin Laden chartered a jet and took a number of his colleagues, along with his ever-growing family, to Jalalabad, in eastern Afghanistan. The expulsion from Sudan reportedly cost him three hundred million dollars in lost investments.

Zawahiri's next movements are unclear. He was tracked by Egyptian intelligence agents in Switzerland and Sarajevo, and he allegedly sought asylum in Bulgaria. An Egyptian newspaper reported that Zawahiri had gone to live in luxury in a Swiss villa near the French border, and that he had thirty million dollars in a secret account. Zawahiri did claim on several occasions to have lived in Switzerland, but the Swiss say they have no evidence that he was ever in the country, much less that he was granted asylum. He turned up briefly in Holland, which does not have an extradition treaty with Egypt. He had talks there about establishing a satellite television channel, backed by wealthy Arabs, that would provide a fundamentalist alternative to the Al Jazeera network, which had recently been launched in Qatar. Zawahiri's plan was to broadcast ten hours a day to Europe and the Middle East, using only male presenters. Nothing came of the idea.

A memo that Zawahiri later wrote to his colleagues—it was recovered from an Al Qaeda computer obtained by a *Wall Street Journal* reporter after the fall of the Taliban—reveals that in December of 1996 he was on his way to Chechnya to establish a new home base for the remnants of Islamic Jihad. "Conditions there were excellent," he wrote in the memo. The Russians had begun to withdraw from Chechnya earlier that year after achieving a ceasefire with the rebellious region. To the Islamists, Chechnya offered an opportunity to create an Islamic republic in the Caucasus, from which they could wage jihad throughout Central Asia.

Soon after Zawahiri and two of his top lieutenants, Ahmad Salama Mabruk and Mahmud Hisham al-Hennawi, crossed into the Russian province of Dagestan, they were arrested for entering the country illegally. The Russians discovered, among other documents, false identity papers, including a Sudanese passport that Zawahiri sometimes used. Zawahiri's passport indicated that he had been to Yemen four times, Malaysia three times, Singapore twice, and China (probably Taiwan) once—all within the previous twenty months. At the trial, in April, 1997, Zawahiri insisted that he had come to Russia "to find out the price for leather, medicine, and other goods." He said he was unaware that he was crossing the border illegally. The judge sentenced the three men to six months in jail. They had nearly completed the term by the time of the trial, and the following month they were released. "God blinded them to our identities," Zawahiri boasted in the account of his trip.

Once again, his disgruntled followers chastised him for his carelessness. An e-mail from colleagues in Yemen referred to the Russia adventure as "a disaster that almost destroyed the group." A measure of bin Laden's feelings about Zawahiri's mishaps was that he gave Jihad only five thousand dollars during the leader's absence.

Jihad had been crushed in Egypt and run out of Sudan, and the organization's hardships were having personal consequences as well. Zawahiri confided to colleagues that he had developed an ulcer. After the fiasco in Russia, Zawahiri and his family had no alternative but to join bin Laden in Jalalabad, a military center that had become the new headquarters for Al Qaeda. Islamists from all over the world were pouring into the camps that bin Laden had established in the surrounding Hindu Kush mountains.

Emboldened by the success of the "Black Hawk Down" incident in Somalia, bin Laden escalated his campaign against America. In November of 1995, Al Qaeda bombed the National Guard communications center, in Riyadh, where American troops were training Saudis in surveillance methods. Five Americans were killed. Al Qaeda struck again in June of 1996, with a bombing at the Khobar Towers dormitory, in Dharan, Saudi Arabia, which killed nineteen American servicemen. (U.S. intelligence officials suspected that Iranian extremists were responsible, but they subsequently learned that Zawahiri called bin Laden immediately afterward to congratulate him on the operation.)

Bin Laden declined to take credit, but two months later, on August 23, 1996, he issued an edict entitled "Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places." In this lengthy statement, published in the London newspaper *Al-Quds al-Arabi,* bin Laden boldly lays out his case against the Saudi ruling family and its American backers. "Everyone agrees that the shadow of a stick cannot be straightened as long as the stick is crooked," he writes. "Hence, it is imperative to focus on attacking the main enemy." He argues that the West deliberately divided the Muslim world into "states and mini-states," which could be easily controlled. He declares, "There is no higher priority, after faith, than pushing back the American-Israeli alliance." He calls upon all Muslims to participate in jihad in order to liberate Saudi Arabia and restore the dignity of the Islamic community. "In view of the enemy's strength, fast and light forces must be used and must operate in absolute secrecy."

IX—"THE WAR HAS JUST BEGUN"

In 1998, Zawahiri commissioned a study on the Jewish influence in America. As a result of the study, Islamic Jihad formally placed the United States on its list of acceptable targets. Bin Laden was sufficiently pleased to raise the organization's annual budget from three hundred thousand dollars to five hundred thousand. "America is now controlled by the Jews, completely, as are its news, its elections, its economy, and its politics," Zawahiri explained in the Jihad journal, *Al-Mujahidoun,* later that year. "It uses Israel to attack its neighbors and to slaughter those who are living peacefully there. . . . If we are a nation of martyrs—as we claim—all that we need is courage of heart and the will of killers and the belief in what we claim to be love of death for Allah's sake. That is the key to our triumph and the beginning of their defeat. If you want to live as free people and to die in honor and be sent as martyrs, the road in front of you is clear."

Zawahiri formally sealed his new alliance with bin Laden on February 23, 1998, when Zawahiri's name appeared as one of the signatories on a document published in *Al-Quds al-Arabi*. The document announced the formation of the International Islamic Front for Jihad on the Jews and Crusaders. "In compliance with God's order," the text read, "we issue the following fatwa to all Muslims: the ruling to kill the Americans and their allies—civilian and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it." Included in the alliance were jihad groups in Afghanistan, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Yemen, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Pakistan, Bosnia, Croatia, Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon, the Philippines, Tajikistan, Chechnya, Bangladesh, Kashmir, Azerbaijan, and Palestine. The document gave the West its first glimpse of the worldwide conspiracy that was beginning to form.

Many members of Islamic Jihad were wary of bin Laden's designs on the "distant enemy." Zawahiri called a meeting of Islamic Jihad in Afghanistan to explain the new global organization, but there was so much resistance that he threatened to resign. "The members were shocked that their leader joined without asking them," Hany al-Sibai told me. "Only a few, who could be counted on the fingers, supported it."

Zawahiri's brother Mohammed, the military commander of Islamic Jihad, had long been a controversial figure in the group, and yet he remained a fixture in the hierarchy of the "company," as the Jihad members called themselves. The two brothers had been together from their underground days. They had sometimes been at odds with each other—on one occasion, Ayman went so far as to denounce Mohammed in front of his colleagues for mismanaging the group's meagre finances. But Mohammed was popular among many of the members, and, as deputy emir, he had run the organization whenever Ayman was travelling. According to Sibai, Mohammed refused to accept the alliance with Al Qaeda, and he left Islamic Jihad not long after the meeting in Afghanistan.

Several members of the Islamic Group tried to have Sheikh Omar named emir of the Islamic Front, but the proposal was brushed aside. Clearly, bin Laden had had enough of the fighting between the Egyptian factions. He told members of Jihad that their ineffectual operations in Egypt were too expensive, and that it was time for them to "turn their guns" on the United States and Israel. Zawahiri's assistant Ahmed al-Najjar later told Egyptian investigators, "I myself heard bin Laden say that our main objective is now limited to one state only, the United States, and involves waging a guerrilla war against all U.S. interests, not only in the Arab region but also throughout the world."

Since the early nineties, Egyptian authorities had felt stymied in their efforts to stamp out Islamic fundamentalists by the protection that Western governments afforded fugitives. The Egyptians complained that more than five hundred terrorists had found refuge in England, France, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, and the United States, among other countries, on the ground that they would be subject to political persecution and perhaps torture if they were sent home. Many European governments refused to return a suspect to face a trial in which he might receive the death penalty.

But the formation of the Islamic Front and its call for a fatwa against Americans and their allies prompted a new vigilance in the West. The C.I.A., which had sporadically tried to keep track of Islamic Jihad over the years, acted quickly. In July of 1998, American agents kidnapped Ahmad Salama Mabruk and another member of Jihad outside a restaurant in Baku, Azerbaijan. Mabruk's laptop computer turned out to contain vital information about Jihad members in Europe. The same summer, the C.I.A. moved against an Islamic Jihad cell in Tirana, Albania; the cell, with sixteen members, had been created by Mohammed al-Zawahiri in the early nineties. Albanian agents, under C.I.A. supervision, kidnapped five members of the cell, blindfolded them, interrogated them for several days, and then sent the Egyptian members to Cairo. They were put on trial with more than a hundred other suspected terrorists. Their lawyer, Hafez Abu-Saada, maintains that they were tortured. The ordeal produced twenty thousand pages of confessions, and both Zawahiri brothers were given death sentences in absentia.

DREAM OF SAFETY

Expiration comes no matter what we do.
No mindfulness forestalls the serial
slough and clockwork days of burial.
It's end-rhymed slogans that ring doubly true.

We are not safe in numbers, not safe two by two.
What it is hard to know we misconstrue.
And human love and unison are null
when even solitude is terminal.

Abandon, please, the fiction of the will,
for gone is gone for good or ill.
Our dead stream by and streak the water blue.
Don't let the smell of burning comfort you.

—*Dana Goodyear*

On August 6th, a month after the breakup of the Albanian cell, Zawahiri sent the following declaration to a London-based Arabic paper: "We are interested in briefly telling the Americans that their message has been received and that the response, which we hope they will read carefully, is being prepared, because, with God's help, we will write it in the language that they understand." The following day, simultaneous suicide bombings destroyed the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania; two hundred and twenty-three people died and more than five thousand were injured.

It is now clear that the bombings had been planned for some time. Zawahiri's man, the double agent Ali Mohamed, testified in New York that bin Laden had asked him to scout American, British, French, and Israeli targets in Nairobi in late 1993. "I took pictures, drew diagrams, and wrote a report," he said. "I later went to Khartoum, where my surveillance files were reviewed by Osama bin Laden . . . and others. Bin Laden looked at the picture of the American Embassy and pointed to where a truck could go as a suicide bomber."

American intelligence officials were unprepared for the extent of the devastation in East Africa, and they were amazed by the skill with which the bombings were carried out. The level of planning and coördination indicated that the bombers had a new degree of sophistication, as well as a willingness to raise the stakes in terms of innocent lives. On August 20th, President Clinton ordered an attack on bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan, and also on a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan that was thought to be manufacturing a precursor to the lethal nerve gas VX.

American warships in the region fired seventy-nine Tomahawk cruise missiles into Afghanistan and Sudan. A subsequent investigation established that the plant in Sudan was making Ibuprofen and veterinary medicines, not poison gas; the strike killed a night watchman.

In Afghanistan, the attack failed to hit its main targets—bin Laden, Zawahiri, and the other Al Qaeda leaders. (The strike also missed Mohamed Atta, the alleged leader of the September 11th attacks, who was reportedly training in one of the camps.)

In the postmortems, there was speculation that the Pakistani intelligence agency had given bin Laden advance warning. However, Samuel Berger, Clinton's national-security adviser, told me that neither the Pakistani Prime Minister nor the head of Pakistan's Army was informed of the strikes until the missiles were in the air. Only half an hour earlier, Zawahiri had been talking on bin Laden's satellite phone to a reporter in Pakistan. Tracking the phone was the best way U.S. intelligence agents had of determining bin Laden's and Zawahiri's whereabouts, and if only surveillance aircraft had been positioned in the region Zawahiri's call would have given the agents their exact location. Zawahiri later told a newspaper in Karachi, Pakistan, that he and bin Laden were safe "somewhere in Afghanistan."

The strikes, which, in the big-chested parlance of military planners, were dubbed Operation Infinite Reach, cost American taxpayers seventy-nine million dollars, but they merely exposed the inadequacy of American intelligence. President Clinton later explained that one of the strikes had been aimed at a "gathering of key terrorist leaders," but the meeting in question had occurred a month earlier. According to Russian intelligence sources cited in *Al-Majallah*, an Arabic magazine in London, bin Laden sold the Tomahawk missiles that failed to explode to China for more than ten million dollars, which he then used to finance operations in Chechnya.

The failure of Operation Infinite Reach established bin Laden as a legendary figure not just in the Muslim world but wherever America, with the clamor of its narcissistic culture and the presence of its military forces, had made itself unwelcome. When bin Laden's voice came crackling across a radio transmission—"By the grace of God, I am alive!"—the forces of anti-Americanism had found their champion. Those who had objected to the slaughter of innocents in the embassies in East Africa, many of whom were Muslims, were cowed by the popular response to this man whose defiance of America now seemed blessed by divine favor.

The day after the strikes, Zawahiri called a reporter in Karachi, with a message: "Tell the Americans that we aren't afraid of bombardment, threats, and acts of aggression. We suffered and survived the Soviet bombings for ten years in Afghanistan and we are ready for more sacrifices. The war has only just begun; the Americans should now await the answer."

After years of fending off criticism of his leadership, Zawahiri resigned as the emir of Islamic Jihad in the summer of 1999. He was angry at the Jihad members who found fault with him from comfortable perches in Europe. He disdainfully called them "the hot-blooded revolutionary strugglers who have now become as cold as ice after they experienced the life of civilization and luxury, the guarantees of the new world order, the gallant ethics of civilized Europe, and the impartiality and materialism of Western civilization." Many of his former allies, exhausted and demoralized by years of setbacks, had become advocates of an initiative by Islamist leaders imprisoned in Egypt, who had declared a unilateral ceasefire. Those who remained loyal to the movement no longer wanted to endure the primitive living conditions in Afghanistan. Yet, even as the organization was disintegrating, Zawahiri rejected any thought of negotiation with the Egyptian regime or with the West. But without his leadership Islamic Jihad was adrift, and several months after he resigned his successor relinquished the post. Zawahiri was back in charge. According to testimony given at the trial of the Albanian cell members, however, the membership of Islamic Jihad outside Egypt had diminished to forty.

Zawahiri's continual efforts to maintain a semblance of autonomy ended in June, 2001, when Islamic Jihad and Al Qaeda merged into a single entity, Qaeda al-Jihad. The name reflected the fact that the Egyptians were still in control; indeed, the nine-member leadership council includes only three non-Egyptians—most prominently, bin Laden. Within the organization, the dominance of the Egyptians has been a subject of contention, especially among the Saudis. According to an American investigator, bin Laden has tried to mollify the malcontents by explaining that he can always count on the Egyptians, since they are unable to go home without being arrested; like

"Also included in the package is a vague sense of your not being good enough to stay here."

him, they are men without a country.

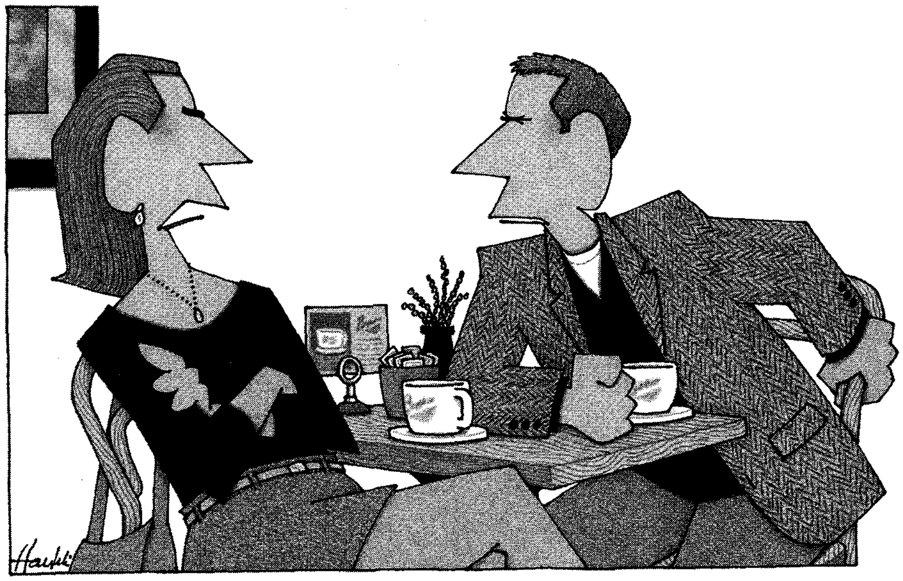
Zawahiri's name had been in American intelligence files at least since the Soviet-Afghan war. The F.B.I. became interested in him after the Islamic Jihad bombing of the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, but at that point he was still seen as an Egyptian problem. When Zawahiri signed the alliance with bin Laden, in February, 1998, the Bureau opened a file on him. Then came the suicide bombings of the American embassies in East Africa, which were planned and executed, in large part, by Egyptian members of Al Qaeda. American intelligence agencies now realized that there was not just one leader of the organization. They began regarding Zawahiri as an equal partner with bin Laden in the planning and carrying out of the terrorist agenda. On October 12, 2000, Al Qaeda bombed the U.S.S. Cole, one of the Navy's most advanced destroyers, in Aden, Yemen. By now, American intelligence knew enough about Zawahiri to realize that he was in charge of the Yemen cell. He was also closely affiliated with the Saudi terrorist Tawifiq bin Atash, who is now thought to have been the planner of that operation. Moreover, the C.I.A. believes that Atash was one of the chief organizers of the September 11th attacks.

As these pieces came together, American intelligence worked more closely with its Egyptian counterparts, and the C.I.A., in conjunction with Egyptian authorities, began to target not just Zawahiri but his brothers. In November, 1999, Mohammed's wife, Aliya, with their five children, surrendered to Egyptian authorities in Yemen, saying that her husband had abandoned them. A few months later, according to Islamist sources, Egyptian intelligence kidnapped Mohammed from the United Arab Emirates and took him back to Cairo, where he "disappeared." Aliya allegedly told Egyptian authorities where the youngest Zawahiri brother, Hussein, could be found. Hussein had been arrested several times on suspicion of having ties to Islamic Jihad, but nothing was ever proved against him. In the late nineties, he was employed as an engineer for a Malaysian company called Multidiscovery, which was building electrical plants. According to a senior intelligence officer in the Clinton White House, American agents ordered the kidnapping of Hussein in Malaysia and flew him to Cairo, where he, too, "disappeared." Six months later, he reemerged, in the middle of the night, wearing the same clothes in which he had been abducted.

X—WHERE IS ZAWAHIRI?

As a man of science, Zawahiri was interested in the use of biological and chemical warfare. In a memo from April of 1999, he observed that "the destructive power of these weapons is no less than that of nuclear weapons," and proposed that Islamic Jihad conduct research into biological and chemical agents. "Despite their extreme danger, we only became aware of them when the enemy drew our attention to them by repeatedly expressing concern that they can be produced simply," he noted. He pored over medical journals to research the subject, and he met with an Egyptian scientist in Afghanistan, Medhat Mursi al-Sayed, whose Jihad name was Abu Khabab. C.I.A. officials believe that Khabab prepared the explosives for the bomb that hit the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad. Khabab supervised elementary tests of nerve gas; satellite photos purportedly show corpses of dogs scattered about one of the camps near Tora Bora, and Al Qaeda training videos recently acquired by CNN show that poison gas had been tested on dogs. "We knew from hundreds of different sources that Al Qaeda was interested in biological and chemical weapons," says Richard A. Clarke, who was the Clinton Administration's national coördinator for counterterrorism in the National Security Council and is now in charge of cybersecurity for the N.S.C. Clarke told me that in one of the camps human volunteers, wearing protective clothing, were exposed to chemicals in tests similar to ones that the U.S. Army has conducted. During the invasion of Afghanistan, American forces discovered a factory under construction, near Kandahar, that intelligence officials say was to be used for the production of anthrax. A sample of anthrax powder was reportedly found in Zawahiri's house in Afghanistan. According to reports from Israel and Russia, bin Laden paid Chechen mobsters millions of dollars in cash and heroin to obtain radiological "suitcase" bombs left over from the Soviets. He declared in November, 2001, "We have chemical and nuclear weapons," and vowed to use them "if America used them against us."

According to a source in the C.I.A., American agents came close to apprehending Zawahiri a month before September 11th, when he travelled to Yemen for medical treatments. "The Egyptian intelligence service briefed us that he was in a hospital in Sanaa," the person told me. "We sent a few people over there, and they made a colossal



"You haven't a clue which buttons to push."

screwup. While our guys were conducting a surveillance of the hospital, the guards caught them with their video-cameras." The plan was compromised, and Zawahiri returned to Afghanistan.

On September 11th, Zawahiri, bin Laden, and their followers evacuated their quarters in Kandahar and fled into the mountains, where they listened to an Arabic radio station's news flashes about the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. According to a C.I.A. report about the events of that morning, at 9:53 A.M., between the crash of American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon and the downing of United Airlines Flight 93 in Pennsylvania, a member of Al Qaeda in Afghanistan was overheard saying that the attackers were following through on "the doctor's program."

On December 3rd, American bombers struck a heavily fortified complex of caves near Jalalabad. When the ground troops arrived, they discovered more than a hundred bodies, and they were able to identify eighteen of them as top Al Qaeda lieutenants. Zawahiri's wife, Azza, and their children were also said to have been killed, but, according to the F.B.I., there is no confirming evidence of this.

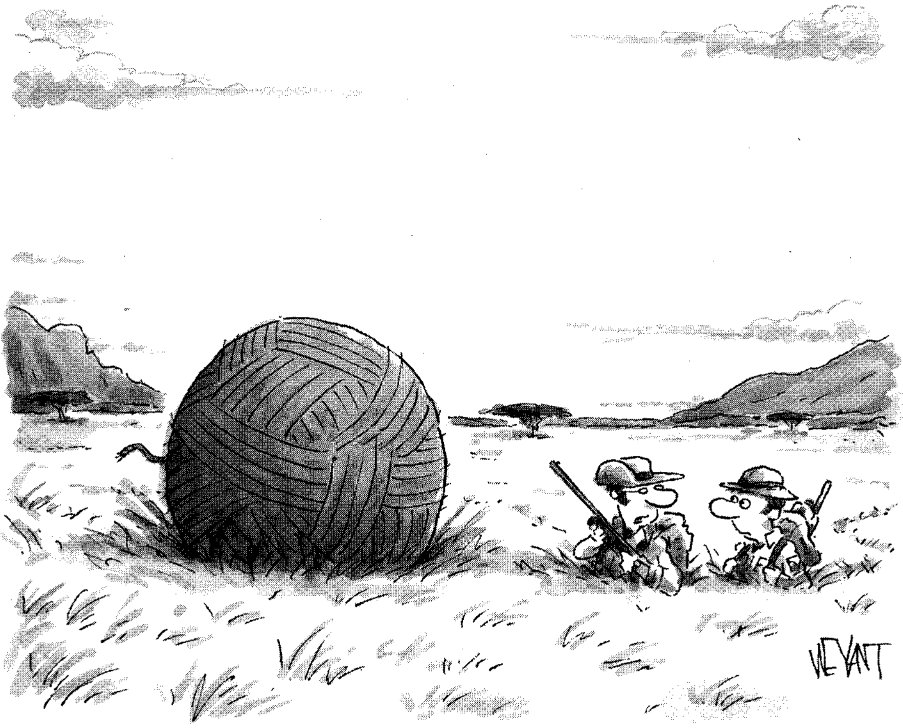
"I'll never forget the first time I saw Azza after a long absence when I went to visit her in Pakistan," Nabila Galal recalled when she heard the reports of her daughter's death. "She was waiting for me at the airport with her three little daughters wearing *hijabs*. They smiled at me, and I will never forget those little children's smiles. Could it be true they all died in the same instant? By the grace of God, we will be hastened."

I asked Azza's older brother, Essam, whether his mother has kept any letters from her daughter in Afghanistan. "Yes," he said, "but she is very ill and very upset and I don't want to cause her any more grief by bringing up this subject. She gets asthma attacks every time she thinks about what happened. I tell her that everything's going to be fine and that, *inshallah*, nothing happened to my sister."

A Northern Alliance commander announced that Zawahiri, too, had been killed in the American bombing, but there was no reliable evidence of his death, either. On December 16th, Zawahiri was quoted by a Cairo-based reporter for *Al-Majallah*. "We are not hiding in caves or avoiding confrontation," he said. "Suicide is a goal that we seek." Because Zawahiri's remarks were dictated to the reporter by an Al Qaeda middleman, it is not possible to know if they are genuine.

There is a videotape of Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri which shows them sitting on a blanket beside a mountain stream—or, in the view of some intelligence analysts, an artificial backdrop—talking about the jihad operations of September 11th. (Their comments are interspersed with scenes from a martyrdom tape of a young man named Ahmed al-Haznawy, one of the hijackers, but the footage with bin Laden and Zawahiri is thought to have been shot sometime in December.) On the tape, a pallid bin Laden says little. Zawahiri is wearing a white galabeya, a black turban, and a vest. Although the black turban may be a sign that he is in mourning for the death of his family, he appears healthy and content. "This great victory was possible only by the grace of God," he says with quiet pride. "This was not just a human achievement—it was a holy act. These nineteen brave men who gave their lives for the cause of God will be well taken care of. God granted them the strength to do what they did. There's no comparison between the power of these nineteen men and the power of America, and there's no comparison between the destruction these nineteen men caused and the destruction America caused."

This may have been Zawahiri's last public statement. Some American intelligence officials believe that he was killed by Pakistani mercenaries as he was riding in an ambulance after being wounded by an American bomb. The killers allegedly buried him, along with other Al Qaeda fighters, in a snowbank, where he lay until spring, when Canadian troops dug up some of the remains. The skull of a corpse believed to be Zawahiri's was sent to a laboratory at F.B.I. headquarters, in Washington. Forensic technicians compared the DNA of the skull with that of Mohammed al-Zawahiri, which is contained in a vial that the Bureau obtained from Egyptian authorities. Tests showed that the skull was not Zawahiri's. ♦



"Keep your guard up, Willoughby. We're entering big-cat country."

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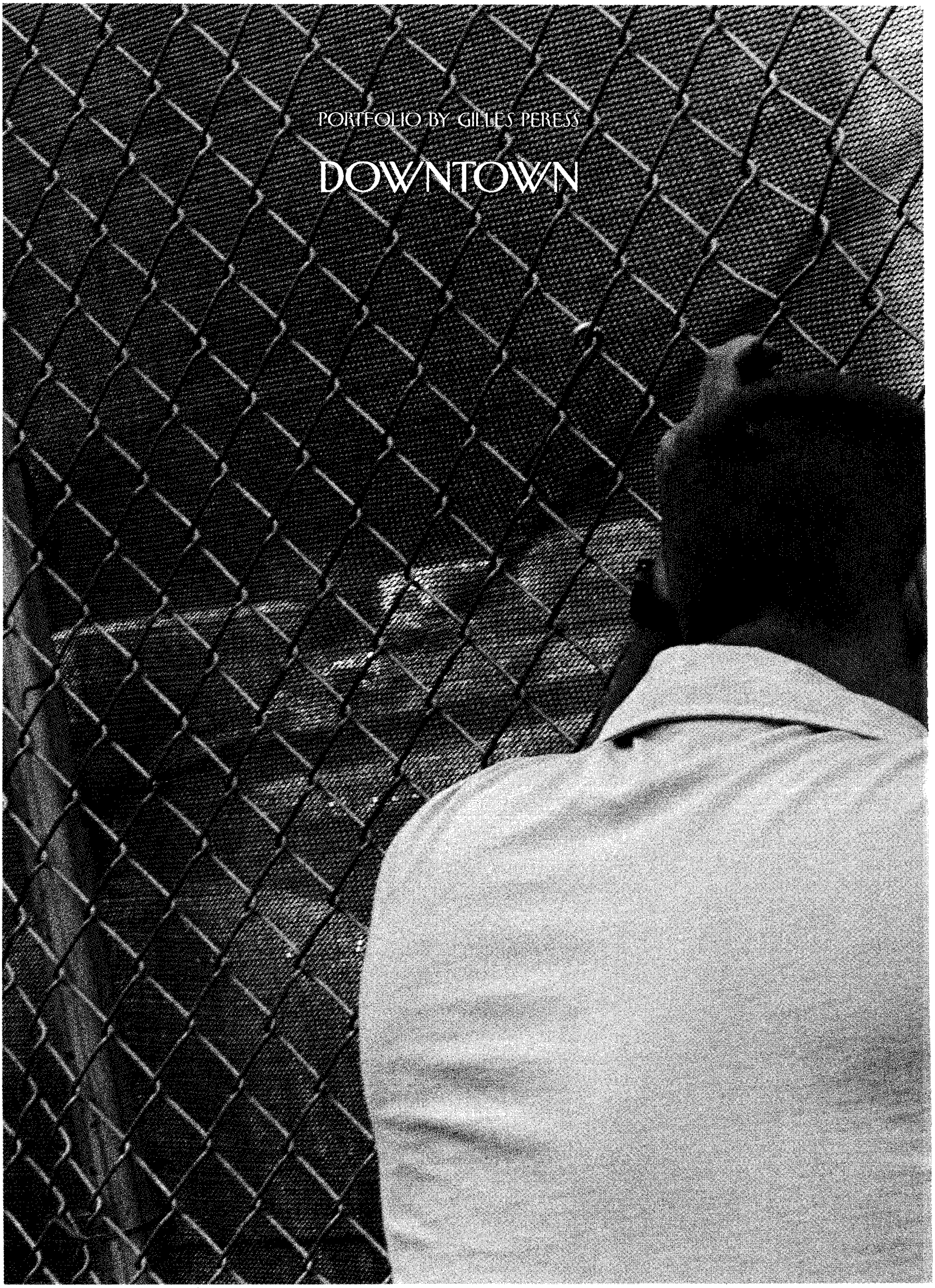

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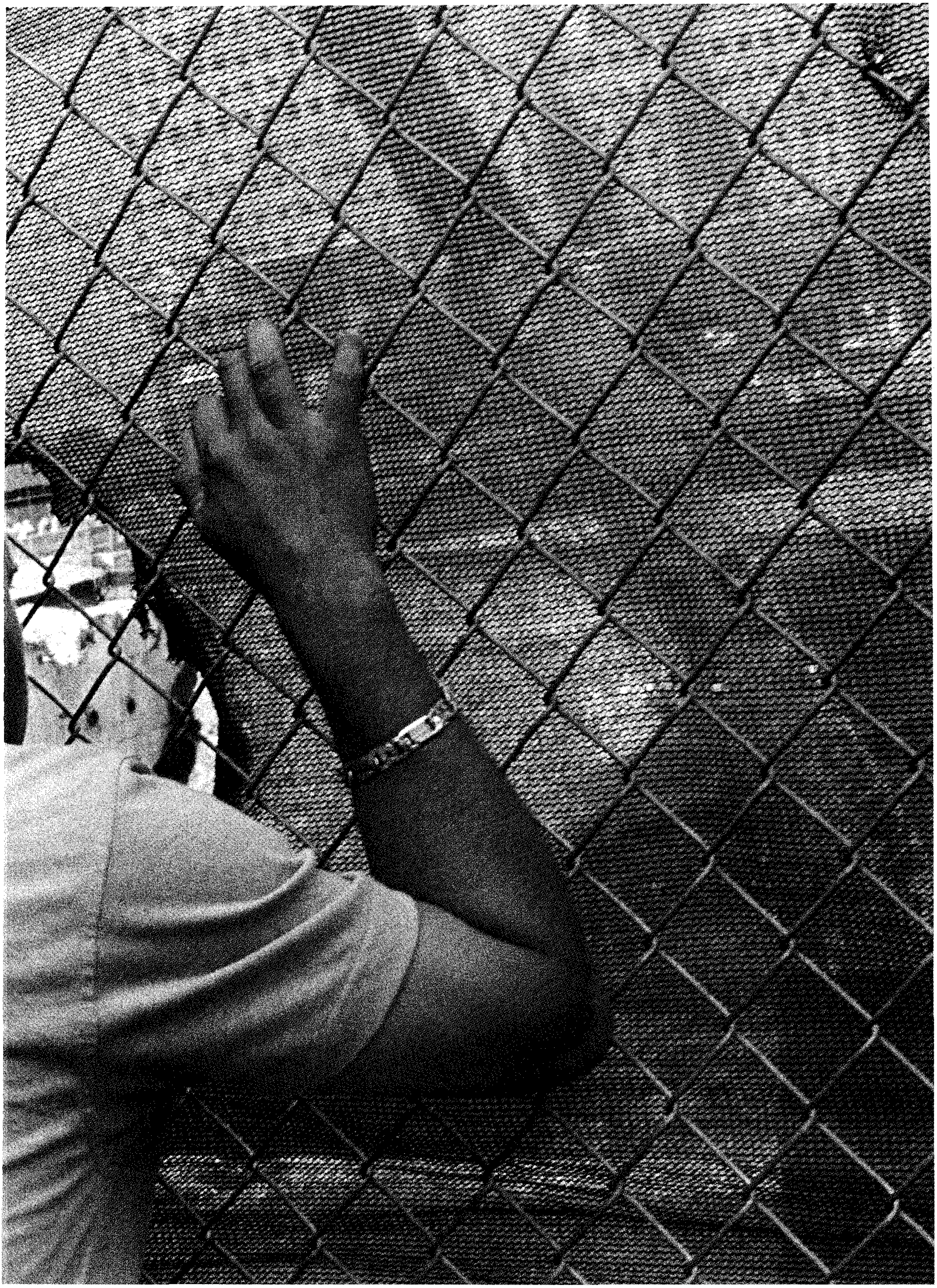

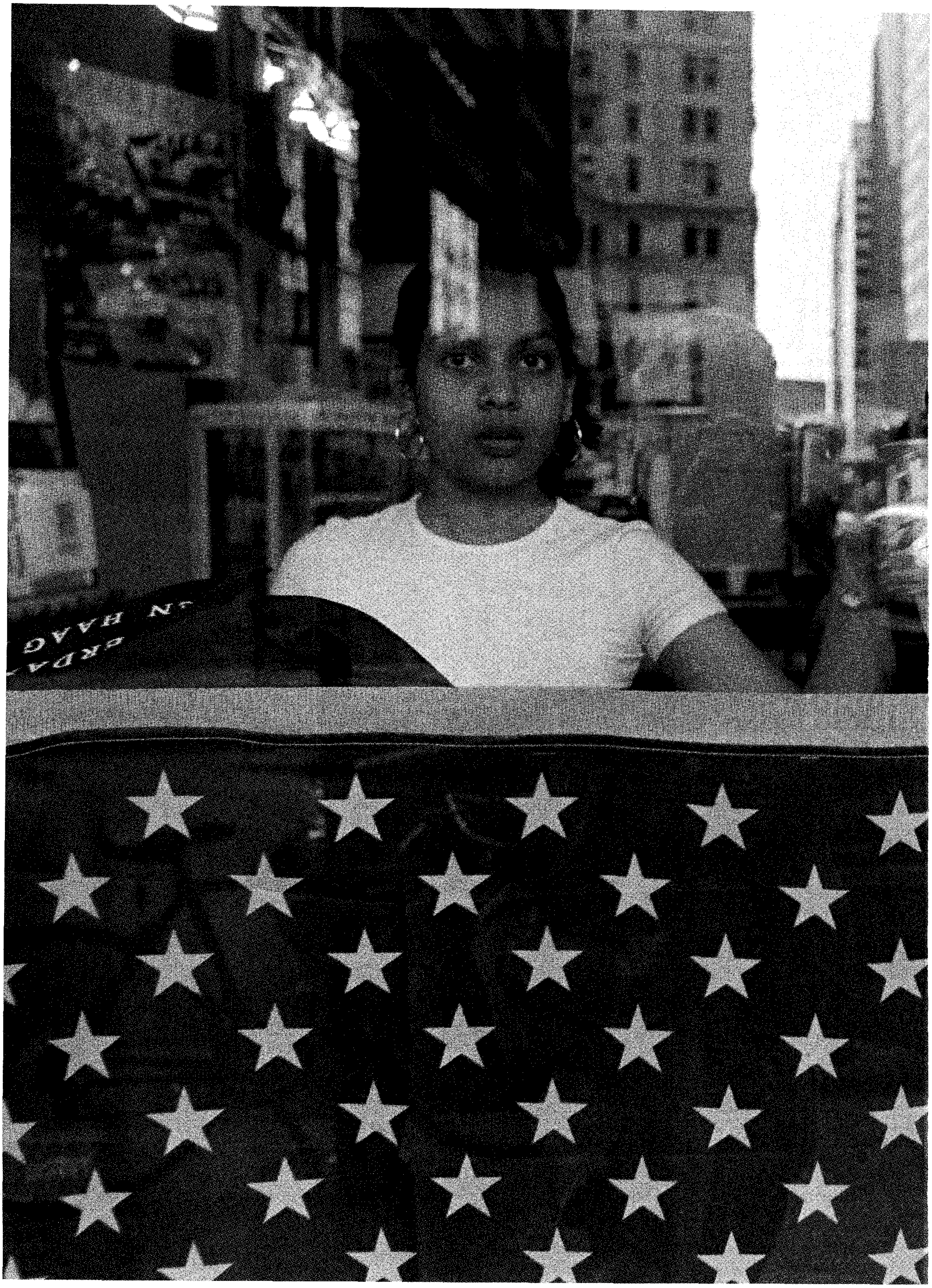

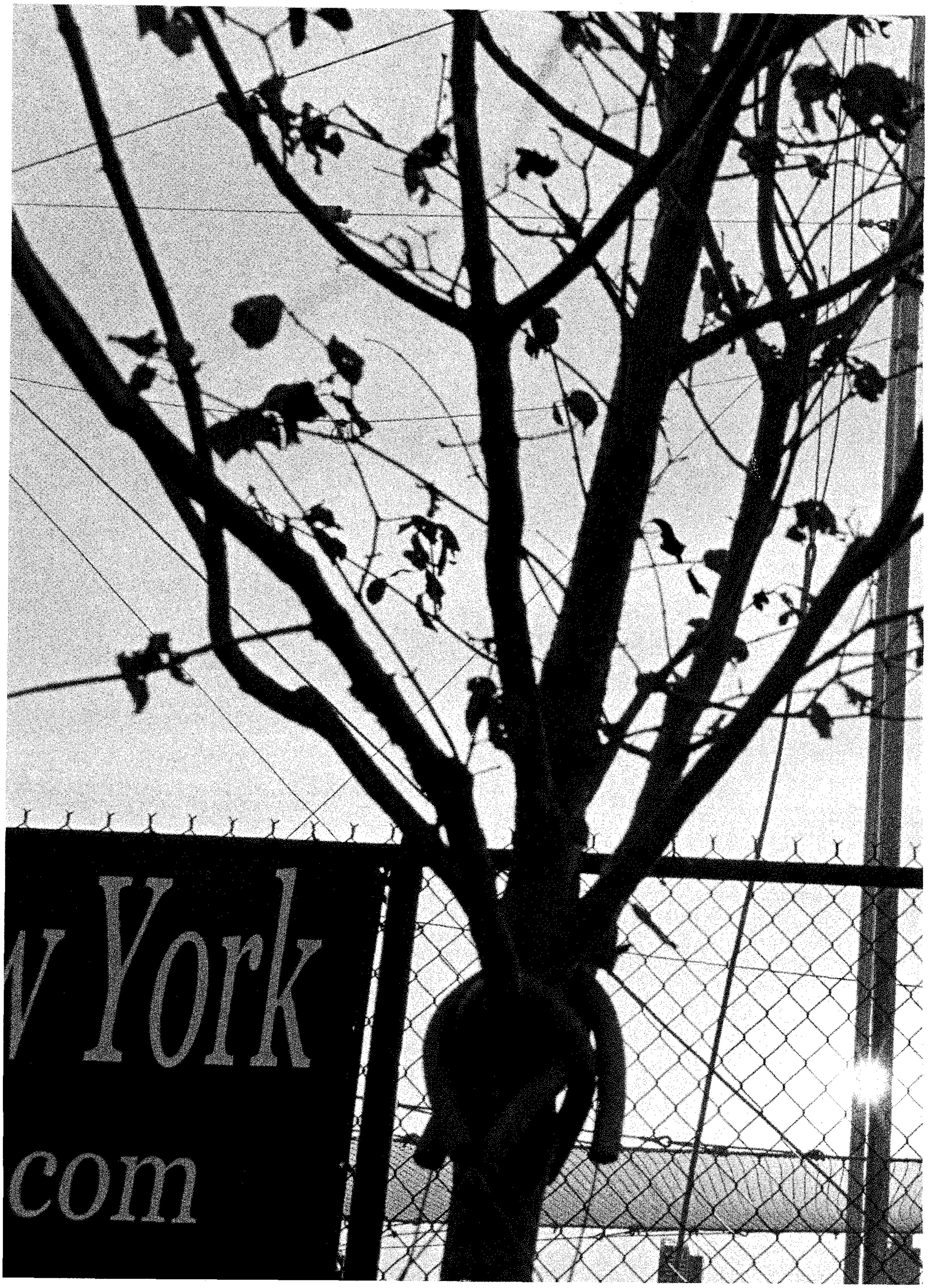
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FICTION

BARK

BY JULIAN BARNES

On the feast day of Jean-Étienne Delacour, the following dishes were prepared on the instructions of his daughter-in-law, Mme. Amélie: bouillon, the beef that had been boiled in it, a grilled hare, a pigeon casserole, vegetables, cheese, and fruit jellies. In a spirit of reluctant sociability, Delacour allowed a dish of bouillon to be placed before him; he even, in honor of the day, raised a ceremonial spoonful to his lips and blew graciously, before lowering it untouched. When the beef was brought in, he nodded at the servant, who laid in front of him, on separate plates, a single pear and a slice of bark that had been cut from a tree some twenty minutes earlier. Delacour's son, Charles, his daughter-in-law, his grandson, his nephew, his nephew's wife, the curé, a neighboring farmer, and Delacour's old friend André Lagrange made no observation. Delacour, for his part, civilly kept pace with those around him, eating one-quarter of the pear while they consumed their beef, one-quarter alongside the hare, and so on. When the cheese was brought in, he took out a pocketknife and cut the tree bark into slices, then chewed each piece slowly to oblivion. Later, as aids to sleep, he took a cup of milk, some stewed lettuce, and a rennet apple. His bedroom was well ventilated and his pillow stuffed with horsehair. He insured that his chest was not weighed down with blankets, and that his feet would remain warm. As he settled his linen nightcap around his temples, Delacour reflected contentedly on the folly of those around him.

He was now sixty-one. In his earlier days, he had been both a gambler and a gourmand, a combination that had frequently threatened to inflict penury on his household. Wherever dice were thrown or cards turned, wherever two or more beasts could be induced to race against one another for the gratification of spectators, Delacour was to be found. He had won and lost at faro and hazard, backgammon and dominoes, roulette and rouge et noir. He would play pitch and toss with an infant, bet his horse on a cockfight, play two-pack patience with Mme. V—— and solitaire when he could find no rival or companion.

It was said that his gourmandism had put an end to his gambling. Certainly, there was no room in such a man for both of these passions to express themselves fully. The moment of crisis had occurred when a goose reared to within days of slaughter—a goose he had fed with his own hand, and savored in advance, down to the last giblet—was lost at a hand of piquet. For a while, Delacour sat between his two temptations like the proverbial ass between two bales of hay; but, rather than starve to death like the indecisive beast, he acted as a true gambler and let a toss of the coin decide the matter.

Thereafter, his stomach and his purse both swelled, while his nerves became calmer. He ate meals fit for a cardinal, as the Italians say. He would discourse on the point of esculence of every foodstuff from capers to woodcock; he could explain how the shallot had been introduced into France by the returning Crusaders, and the cheese of Parma by M. le Prince de Talleyrand. When a partridge was placed in front of him, he would remove the legs, take a bite from each in a considered manner, nod judicially, and announce which leg the partridge had been accustomed to rest its weight on while sleeping. He was also a familiar of the bottle. If grapes were offered as a dessert, he would push them away with the words "I am not in the habit of taking my wine in the form of pills."

Delacour's wife had approved his choice of vice, since gourmandism is more likely to keep a man at home than gambling. As the years passed, her silhouette began to ape that of her husband. They lived plumply and easily until one day, fortifying herself in the midafternoon while her husband was absent, Mme. Delacour choked to death on a chicken bone. Jean-Étienne cursed himself for having left his wife unattended; he cursed his gourmandism, her complicity in which had led to her death; and he cursed fate, chance, whatever governs our days, for having lodged the chicken bone at just such a murderous angle in her throat.

When his initial grief began to recede, he accepted lodging with Charles and Mme. Amélie. He began a study of the law, and could often be found absorbed in the Nine Codes of the Kingdom. He knew the rural code by heart and comforted himself with its certainties. He could cite the laws concerned with the swarming of bees and the making of compost; he knew the penalties for ringing church bells during a storm and for selling milk that had come into contact with copper pans; word for word, he recited ordinances governing the behavior of wet nurses, the pasturing of goats in forests, and the burial of dead animals found on the public highway.

For a while, he continued with his gourmandizing, as if to do otherwise would be faithless to the memory of his wife; but, though his stomach was still in it, his heart was not. What led to his abandonment of his former passion was the municipality's decision, in the autumn of 18—, that, as a matter of hygiene and general beneficence, a public bathhouse should be built. That a man who had greeted the invention of a new dish as an astronomer would the discovery of a new star should be brought to temperance and moderation by a matter of soap and water moved some to mockery and others to moralizing. But Delacour had always given little heed to the opinions of others.

The municipality, in order to excite interest in the project, had devised a scheme based upon an Italian idea. The sum to be raised was divided into forty equal lots; each of the subscribers was obliged to be over forty years of age. Interest would be paid at the rate of two and a half per cent per annum, and upon the death of an investor the interest accruing to his share would be divided among the remaining subscribers. Simple mathematics led to a simple temptation: the last surviving investor would, from the thirty-ninth death until his own, enjoy an annual interest equal to the full sum of his original stake. The loans would terminate upon the death of the final subscriber, when the capital would be returned to the nominated heirs of the forty investors.

The death of Delacour's wife had brought him a small legacy, and Mme. Amélie proposed that it might be both a prudent and a civic gesture for him to invest it in the building of the baths. When she first mentioned the scheme to her husband, he was doubtful. "You do not think, my dear, that it might awaken my father's old passion?"

"It can scarcely be called gambling when there is no possibility of losing."

"That is surely what all gamblers constantly claim."

But Delacour approved his daughter-in-law's suggestion. He followed the progress of the subscription keenly. As each new investor came forward, he entered the man's name in a pocket book, adding his date of birth and general remarks upon his health, appearance, and genealogy. When a landowner fifteen years his senior joined the scheme, Delacour was merrier than he had been at any time since the death of his wife. After a few weeks, the list was filled, whereupon he wrote to the thirty-nine other subscribers suggesting that since they had all, as it were, enlisted in the same regiment, they might choose to distinguish themselves by some sartorial mark, such as a ribbon in the coat. He also proposed that they institute a supper to be held annually for subscribers—he had almost written "survivors."

Few looked favorably on either proposal; some did not even reply; but Delacour continued to view his fellow-subscribers as comrades in arms. If he met one in the street, he would salute him warmly, inquire about his health, and exchange a few general words, perhaps about cholera. With his friend Lagrange, who had also subscribed, he would pass long hours at the Café Anglais, playing actuary with the lives of the other thirty-eight.

The municipal baths had not yet been declared open when the first subscriber died. Jean-Étienne, at supper with his family, proposed a toast to the overoptimistic and now lamented septuagenarian. Later, he took out his pocket book, made an entry, with a date, and drew a long black line underneath.

Mme. Amélie commented to her husband on the high spirits of her father-in-law, which seemed to her inappropriate.

"Death in general is his friend," Charles replied. "It is only his own death that should be considered his enemy."

Mme. Amélie briefly wondered if this was a philosophical truth or an empty platitude. She had an amiable nature, and worried little about her husband's actual opinions. She was more concerned about the manner in which he delivered them, which was increasingly beginning to resemble that of his father.

Along with a large engraved certificate of subscription, investors also received the right to use the baths gratis "for the full period of investment." Few were expected to do so, since those wealthy enough to subscribe were certainly wealthy enough to own a bathtub. But Delacour took to invoking his right, first on a weekly, then on a daily, basis. Some regarded this as an abuse of the municipality's benevolence, but Delacour was unswayed. His days now followed a fixed pattern. He would rise early, eat a single fruit, drink two glasses of water, and walk for three hours. Then he would visit the baths, where he soon became familiar with the attendants; as a subscriber, he was allowed a special towel reserved for his use. Afterward, he would make his way to the Café Anglais, where he would discuss the matters of the day with his friend Lagrange. The matters of the day, in Delacour's mind, rarely amounted to more than two: any foreseeable diminution of the subscribers' list, and the lax application of various laws by the municipality. It had, in his opinion, insufficiently advertised the scale of reward for the destruction of wolves: twenty-five francs for a she-wolf in cub, eighteen francs for a she-wolf not in cub, twelve for a male wolf, six for a cub, the amounts to be paid within a week following verification of the evidence.

Lagrange, whose mind was of a contemplative rather than a theoretical cast, considered this complaint. "And yet I do not know of anyone," he commented mildly, "who has observed a wolf in the last eighteen months."

"The more reason that the populace should be prompted to vigilance."

Delacour next denounced the lack of stringency and frequency with which wine was tested for adulteration. By Article 38 of the law of July 19, 1791, still applicable, a fine of up to a thousand francs and imprisonment for a period of up to one year might be imposed upon those who mixed litharge, fish glue, extract of campeche wood, or other noxious substances with the wine they sold.

"You drink only water," Lagrange pointed out. He raised his own glass and peered at the wine within. "Besides, if our host were to embark on such practices, it might very happily reduce the list of subscribers."

"I do not intend to win in such a fashion."

Lagrange was disturbed by the harshness of his friend's tone. "Win," he repeated. "You can win, if you call it 'winning,' only by my death."

"That I shall regret," Delacour said, evidently unable to conceive of an alternative outcome.

After the Café Anglais, Delacour would return home and read works on physiology and diet. Twenty minutes before supper, he would cut himself a fresh slice of tree bark. While others ate their life-shortening concoctions, he would expatiate upon general threats to health and the lamentable impediments to human immortality.

These impediments gradually reduced the list of subscribers. With each death, Delacour's good cheer increased, and so did the strictness of his regimen. Exercise, diet, sleep; regularity, temperance, study. One work of physiology indicated, with veiled phrasing and a sudden burst of Latin, that a reliable mark of health in the human male was the frequency with which he engaged in sexual connection. Both total abstinence and

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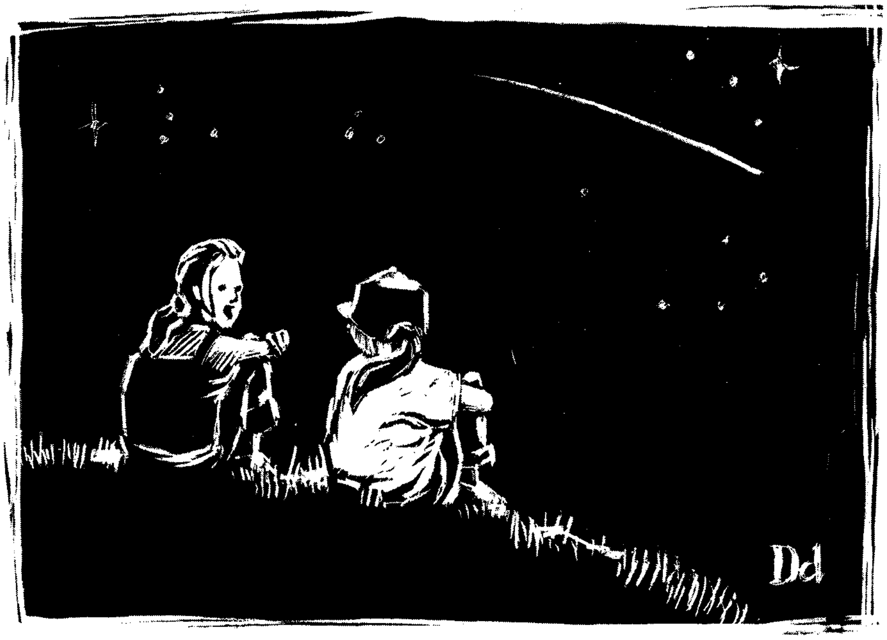

"If you close your eyes and make an allegation, someday it might come true."

excessive indulgence were potentially harmful, although not as harmful as certain practices associated with abstinence. But a moderate frequency—for example, exactly once per week—was deemed to be salutary.

Delacour, convinced of this practical necessity, rendered up excuses to his dead wife and entered into an arrangement with a maid at the baths, whom he visited once a week. She was grateful for the money he left, and once he had discouraged displays of affection he looked forward to their exchanges. He decided that, when the thirty-ninth subscriber died, he would give her a hundred francs, or perhaps a little less, in recognition of her life-prolonging services.

More investors died; Delacour entered their terminal dates in his pocket book and smilingly toasted their departures. On one such evening, Mme. Amélie, after retiring, said to her husband, "What is the reason for living if it is only to outlive others?"

"Each of us must find his own reason," Charles replied. "That is his."

"But do you not find it strange that what seems to afford him the most joy nowadays is the death of other mortals? He takes no customary pleasure in life. His days are ordered as if in obedience to the strictest duty—and yet duty to what, duty to whom?"

"The subscription was your proposal, my dear."

"I did not foresee, when I proposed it, the effect that it might have upon his character."

"My father's character," Charles replied sternly, "is unchanged. He is an old man now, and a widower. Naturally, his pleasures are diminished and his interests have altered somewhat. Yet he applies the same vigor of mind and the same logic to what interests him now as he did to what interested him before. His character has not changed," Charles repeated, as if his father were being charged with senility.

André Lagrange, had he been asked, would have agreed with Mme. Amélie. Once a voluptuary, Delacour had become an ascetic; once an advocate of tolerance, Delacour had developed a severity toward his fellow-men.

Seated at the Café Anglais, Lagrange listened to a peroration concerning the inadequate enforcement of the eighteen articles governing the cultivation of tobacco. Then there was a silence, a sip of water was taken, and Delacour continued, "Every man should have three lives. This is my third."

Bachelorhood, marriage, widowerhood, Lagrange supposed. Or perhaps gambling, gourmandism, the tontine. But Lagrange had been contemplative for long enough to recognize that men were often provoked to universal statements by some everyday event whose significance was being exaggerated. "And her name?" he asked.

"It is strange," Delacour said, "how, as life proceeds, the dominant sentiments may change. When I was young, I respected the priest, I honored my family, I was full of ambition. As for the passions of the heart, I discovered, when I met the woman who was to become my wife, that a long prologue of love led finally, with the sanction and approval of society, to those carnal delights that we hold so dear. Now that I have grown older, I am less persuaded that the priest can show us the best way to God, my family often exasperates me, and I have no ambition left."

"That is because you have acquired a certain wealth and a certain philosophy."

"No, it is more that I judge the individual rather than the social rank he fills. The curé is a pleasant companion but a theological fool; my son is honest but tedious. Observe that I do not claim virtue for this change in my understanding. It is merely something that has happened to me."

"And carnal delight?"

Delacour sighed and shook his head. "When I was a young man, in my Army years, before meeting my late wife, I naturally accommodated myself with the sort of women who made themselves available. Nothing in those experiences of my youth told me of the possibility that carnal delight might lead to feelings of love. I imagined—no, I was sure—that it was always the other way round."

"And her name?"

"The swarming of bees," Delacour replied. "As you know, the law is clear. So long as the owner follows his bees as they swarm, he has the right to reclaim and take possession of them again. But if he has failed to follow them then the proprietor of the ground on which they alight has legal title to them. Or take the case of rabbits. Those rabbits that pass from one warren to another become the property of the man on whose land the second warren is situated, unless this proprietor has enticed them thither by means of fraud or artifice. As with pigeons and doves. If they fly to common land, they belong to whosoever may kill them. If they fly to another dovecote, they belong to the owner of that dovecote, provided, again, that he has not enticed them thither by fraud or artifice."

"You have quite lost me." Lagrange looked on benignly, familiar with such perambulations from his friend.

"I mean that we make such certainties as we can. But who can foresee when the bees might swarm? Who can foresee whither the dove might fly, or when the rabbit might tire of its warren?"

"And her name?"

"Jeanne. She is a maid at the baths."

"Jeanne who is a maid at the baths?" Everyone knew Lagrange for a mild man. Now he stood up quickly, kicking his chair backward. The noise reminded Delacour of his Army days, of sudden challenges and broken furniture.

"You know her?"

"Jeanne who is a maid at the baths? Yes. And you must renounce her."

Delacour did not understand. That is to say, he understood the words but not their motive or purpose. "Who can foresee whither the dove might fly?" he repeated, pleased with this formulation.

Lagrange was leaning over him, knuckles on the table, almost trembling, it seemed. Delacour had never seen his friend so serious or so angry. "In the name of our friendship you must renounce her," he said.

"You have not been listening." Delacour leaned back in his chair, away from his friend's face. "At the start it was simply a matter of hygiene. I insisted on the girl's docility. I wanted no caresses in return—I discouraged them. I paid her little attention. And yet, in spite of all this, I have come to love her. Who can foresee—"

"I have been listening, and in the name of our friendship I insist."

Delacour considered the request. No, it was a demand, not a request. He was suddenly back at the card table, faced with an opponent who for no evident reason had raised his bid tenfold. At such moments, assessing the inexpressive fan in his opponent's hands, Delacour had always relied on instinct, not calculation.

"No," he replied quietly, as if laying down a small trump.

Lagrange left.

Delacour sipped his glass of water and calmly reviewed the possibilities. He

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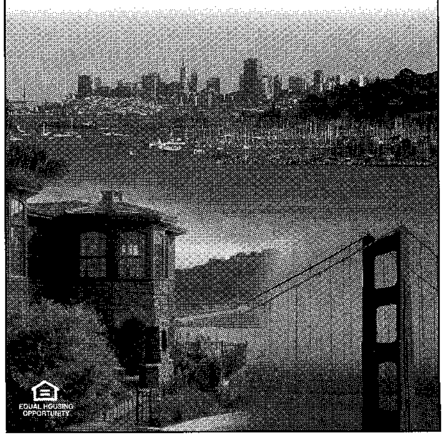

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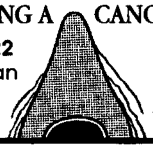

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reduced them to two: disapproval or jealousy. He ruled out disapproval: Lagrange had always been an observer of human behavior, not a moralist who condemned its vagaries. So it must be jealousy. Of the girl herself, or of what she represented: health, longevity, victory? Truly, the subscription was driving men to strange behavior. It had made Lagrange overexcited, and he had gone off like a swarm of bees. Well, Delacour would not follow him. Let him land wherever he chose.

Delacour continued with his daily routine. He did not mention Lagrange's defection to anyone, and he constantly expected him to reappear at the café. He missed their discussions, or at least Lagrange's attentive presence; but gradually he resigned himself to the loss. He began to visit Jeanne more frequently. She did not question this, and listened as he talked of legal matters she rarely understood. Having previously been warned against impertinent expressions of affection, she remained quiet and tractable, but did not fail to notice that his caresses had become gentler. One day, she informed him that she was with child.

"Twenty-five francs," he replied automatically. She protested that she was not asking for money. He apologized—his mind had been elsewhere—and asked if she was confident that the child was his. On hearing her assurance—or, more exactly, the tone of her assurance, which had none of the vehemence of mendacity—he offered to have the baby placed with a wet nurse and to provide an allowance for it. He kept to himself the surprising love he had come to feel for Jeanne. To his mind, it was not really her affair; it concerned him, not her, and he also felt that, were he to express what he felt, it might depart, or become complicated in a way that he did not desire. He let her understand that she could rely upon him; that was enough. Otherwise, he enjoyed his love as a private matter. It had been a mistake to tell Lagrange; doubtless it would be a mistake to tell anyone else.

A few months later, Lagrange became the thirty-sixth member of the tontine to die. Since Delacour had told no one of their quarrel, he felt obliged to attend the funeral. As the coffin was being lowered, he remarked to Mme. Amélie, "He did not take sufficient care of himself."

When Delacour looked up, he saw Jeanne, standing at the back of a group of mourners on the other side of the grave, her dress now full in front of her.

The law relating to wet nurses was, in his view, ineffective. The declaration of January 19, 1715, was plain enough. Wet nurses were forbidden to suckle two infants at the same time, on pain of correctional punishment for the woman and a fine of fifty francs for her husband; they were obliged to declare their own pregnancies as soon as the second month was reached; they were also forbidden to send infants back to the parental home, even in cases of nonpayment, but were obliged, instead, to continue their service and be reimbursed by the police tribunal. Yet everyone knew that such women could not always be trusted. They made arrangements for additional infants; they lied about the advancement of their pregnancies; and, if there was a dispute over payment between parents and wet nurse, it was not unknown for the child not to survive the following week. Perhaps he should permit Jeanne to feed the child herself after all, since that was what she wanted.

At their next encounter, Delacour expressed surprise at her presence at the graveside. Lagrange had never, as far as he knew, exercised the right to use the municipal baths.

"He was my father," she replied.

Of Paternity and Filiation, he thought. Decree of March 23, 1803, promulgated April 2nd. Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

"How?" was all he could say.

"How?" she repeated.

"Yes, how?"

"In the usual manner, I am sure," the girl said.

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"Yes."

"He used to visit my mother as . . ."

"As I visit you."

"Yes. He was much taken with me. He wished to acknowledge me, to make me . . ."

"Legitimate?"

"Yes. My mother did not want this. There was a dispute. She feared he would try to steal me. She guarded me. Sometimes he would spy on us. When she was dying, my mother made me promise never to receive him or to have contact with him. I promised. I did not think that . . . that the funeral amounted to contact."

Jean-Étienne Delacour sat on the girl's narrow bed. Something was slipping in his mind. The world was making less sense than it should. This child, provided it survived the hazards of accouchement, would be Lagrange's grandchild. What he chose not to tell me, what Jeanne's mother kept from him, what I, in my turn, have not told Jeanne. We make the laws but the bees swarm anyway, the rabbit seeks a different warren, the pigeon flies to another's dovecote.

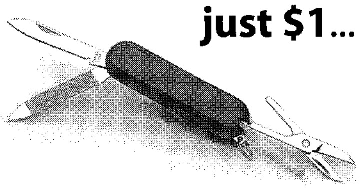
"When I was a gambler," he said finally, "people disapproved. They thought it was a vice. I never thought so. To me it seemed the application of logical scrutiny to human behavior. When I was a gourmand, people judged it an indulgence. I never thought so. To me it seemed a rational approach to human pleasure."

He looked at her. She seemed to have no idea what he was talking about. Well, that was his own fault. "Jeanne," he said, taking her hand. "You need have no fear for your child. No fear of the kind your mother had. It is not necessary."

"Yes, sir."

At supper, he listened to his grown-up son's prattle and declined to correct numerous idiocies. He chewed on a sliver of tree bark, but without appetite. Later, his cup of milk tasted as if it had come from a copper pan, his stewed lettuce stank of the dunghill, his rennet apple had the texture of a horsehair pillow.

In the morning, when they found him, his linen nightcap was grasped in a rigid hand, though whether he had been about to put it on, or whether for some reason he had just chosen to remove it, no one could tell. ♦



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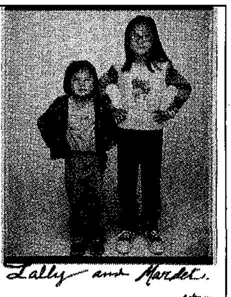

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FAITH, HOPE, AND CLARITY

September 11th and the American soul.

BY LOUIS MENAND

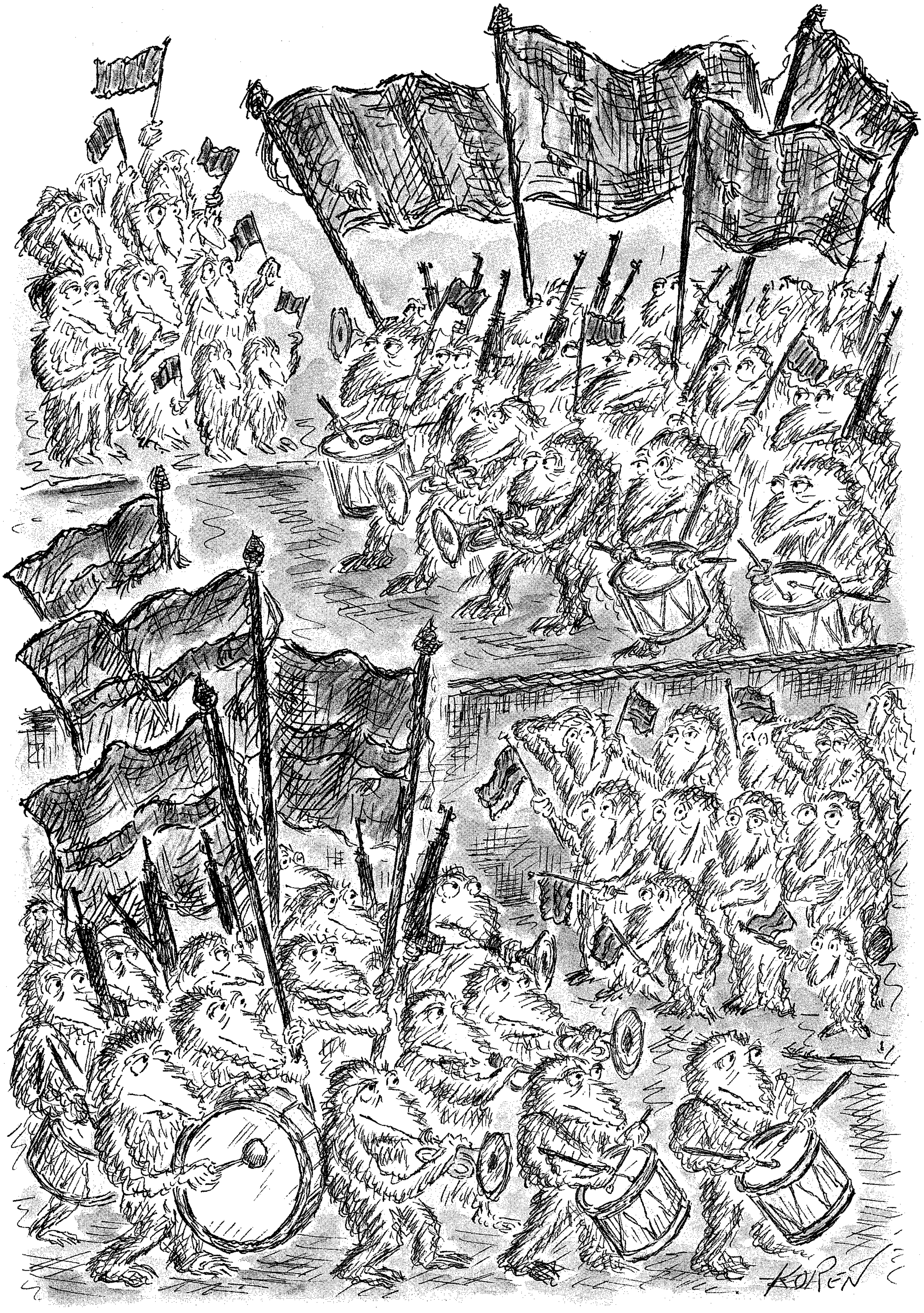
The initial response of most cultural and political critics to the attacks of September 11th—a completely unanticipated atrocity carried out by an organization that few people in the West had ever heard of and whose intentions are still not entirely comprehensible—was: It just proves what I've always said. The attacks were treated as geopolitics for dummies, confirming conclusions that sensible observers had reached long before. September 11th showed that the United States is hated by many good people around the world because it is an imperial bully; the United States is hated by many bad people around the world because it is a beacon of freedom and opportunity; Islam is a civilization irredeemably hostile to Western values; Islam is a civilization assimilating Western values; globalization has gone too far; globalization has not gone far enough; Arafat is a terrorist; Zionism is racism; movies are too violent; and postmodernism is dead. The surprising thing about most of the published reflections on September 11th is how devoid of surprise they are. They are so devoid of surprise as to be almost devoid of thought.

If Germany invaded France without warning tomorrow, it is unlikely that the world would take it as the occasion for a referendum on the question Is France good or bad? Or, even more imponderable, *La France, qu'est-ce que c'est*? But many people did seize on September 11th as an opportunity to look into the American soul. This was true not only of people who believed that the United States "had it coming"; it was true of people who believed that the United States was "worth defending." Since no one thought that the attacks were justified, or that they should go unpunished, or that they were in any sense deserved by the people who were killed in them, this wasn't the most logical response. But it was natural. People who walk away from a car crash in which they might have died, or who narrowly escape drowning, sometimes react by reassessing their entire lives—as though the accident were a judgment. It wasn't; it was an accident. Even if they were driving a little too fast or swimming a little too far out, the meaning of their whole way of life was not at stake. But they often feel that it was, and September 11th produced this effect. For many Americans, it suddenly felt as though we weren't quite who we thought we were. And this is why it is so disappointing to be told, in the books published so far on the "meaning" of September 11th, what we have always been told about ourselves. Possibly there is consolation in this, but consolation is not one of the goals of critical thought.

Anti-Americanism is the view that the United States is basically a global bad guy, a nation that was founded on the impulses of materialism and expansionism, and that is getting more materialist and expansionist every decade. This school of thought needs to be distinguished from what might be called dissenting patriotism, which is the view that the United States is basically a virtuous republic that has recently been betrayed by runaway corporate capitalism and by the emergence of a national-security state contemptuous of individual liberties and international law. Noam Chomsky belongs to the first school.

The commercial success of Chomsky's "9-11" (Seven Stories; $8.95), which was sent to the printer less than five weeks after the attacks, and which became a best-seller, is more interesting than the book itself, which consists of transcripts of interviews Chomsky gave, mostly to foreign journalists, right after September 11th. Chomsky's comments follow from the view that, in his words, "the U.S. itself is a leading terrorist state," a position that he has maintained for many years, and in support of which he offers, in this book, a number of illustrations, including the American destruction of the Al-Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Sudan, in 1998, and the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children as a result of economic sanctions first imposed in 1990. Such actions, he believes, are only the latest chapter in the subjugation of the globe by the North Atlantic powers which has been under way since the fifteenth century.

Chomsky does not suggest that the September 11th attacks were a legitimate response to American aggression. His point is only that it is naïve to imagine that the United States is an innocent victim. In fact, Chomsky unequivocally condemns the attacks, and bin Laden and his network; and this leaves him with the problem of explaining the causal relevance of the bombing of Al-Shifa (apparently the result of an intelligence failure) and the Iraqi deaths (a claim based on disputed statistics) to the massacres at the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. Here he has recourse to the highly useful concept of "blowback." Al Qaeda, he explains, is the metastasization of the radical Muslim forces that the United States, and some of its allies, organized to resist the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, in 1979, in the hope of trapping the Soviet Union in a Vietnam-style quagmire. Now the monster has turned on its creator. Bin Laden, as the Indian writer Arundhati Roy, whose views are identical to Chomsky's, put it shortly after the attacks, "has the distinction of being created by the CIA and wanted by the FBI." The destruction of the World Trade Center is, therefore, an instance of what Malcolm X, in a not dissimilar context—the assassination of John F. Kennedy—described as the chickens coming home to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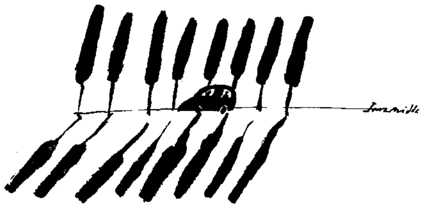
roost. It isn't exactly what the United States was asking for, but the United States was asking for something.

Blowback, as the term is used in the literature on September 11th, is intended to carry moral weight: if you insist on tramping through other people's flower gardens, you can't complain when you get stung is the general idea. But this is true, without moral implication, of any sufficiently complex undertaking. It's like saying, If you keep building huge passenger ships, sooner or later one of them is going to hit an iceberg, or, If you keep making rockets to launch human beings into orbit, sooner or later one of them will explode. The destruction of the World Trade Center—an almost inconceivably long-odds operation in itself—was at the extreme of the imaginable consequences of supporting an Afghan resistance movement in 1979. On some level, it's just a consequence of participating in global affairs at all. This is why the notion, proposed by a number of far less severe critics of American policy than Chomsky and Roy, that September 11th was a "wake-up call" is empty. Wake up to what? The fact that the United States is involved in the affairs of other nations? If that is a problem, we are left with only two alternatives: isolationism or conquest. Anything in between is bound to produce results that Americans do not like but could not have foreseen.

Chomsky's book received few reviews, and it can hardly be said to harmonize with the national sentiment after September 11th. Why did it sell so well? No doubt there was some impulse buying: "9-11" is a pocket-size paperback that bookstores often displayed at the cash register, alongside the latest Zagat. But, arrogantly indifferent to the ordinary protocols of argument as it is, "9-11" was practically the only counter-narrative out there at a time when questions tended to be drowned out by a chorus, led by the entire United States Congress, of "God Bless America." It was one of the few places where the other side of the case could be found; and intelligent patriotism entails knowing the arguments you have to answer. And, outlandish as it may seem to most Americans today, it is possible that, if the United States goes the way of nineteenth-century Britain, Chomsky's interpretation will be the standard one among historians a hundred years from now. People will talk about the destruction of the World Trade Center the way we talk about the Indian Mutiny or Custer's Last Stand—a terrible massacre, but they had it coming. Which is a good reason never to worry about what future historians will think of us: they'll despise us no matter what. It's what we think of us that we need to be concerned with.

Gore Vidal is a dissenting patriot, a nostalgist of the lost republic. The only reasonable conclusion to be drawn from the success of his book "Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace: How We Got to Be So Hated" (Thunder's Mouth/Nation Books; $10), which was also a paperback best-seller, is that if you put Gore Vidal's name on the cover people will buy it. There are a hundred and sixty pages of text, only eighteen of which (plus a brief preface) are devoted to musings on September 11th. The rest of the book consists of a twenty-page chart of "United States Military Operations," on loan from an outfit called the Federation of American Scientists; two articles that Vidal wrote for *Vanity Fair* about Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City bombing; and an assortment of odds and ends related to that subject. The whole thing is boldly packaged as Vidal's response to September 11th. There is no cogent connection between what McVeigh did and what bin Laden did, and Vidal proposes none, except to suggest that since people (for whatever reasons) clearly hate the American government he must be correct in his belief that the American government is hateful, the brutal face of a "seedy imperial state" in terminal decline. He has been saying this for fifty years.

One well-known American writer has transcended expectations in her response to September 11th. Alice Walker's "Sent by Earth: A Message from the Grandmother Spirit After the Attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon" (Seven Stories; $5) is adapted from a lecture she delivered, eleven days after the attacks, to the Midwives Alliance of North America—an audience presumably con-



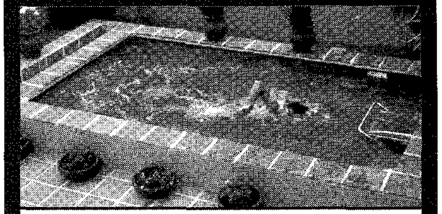
ditioned to be receptive to the fresh take. Walker starts with the reminder, familiar to readers of Chomsky and Vidal, that terrorism begins at home. "I personally would like him to understand," she says of bin Laden, "that the shadow he wishes upon us, of poverty, fear, an almost constant state of terror, is merely the America too many of us already know." But her purpose is to console, not to blame, and although she is impatient with those whose idea of adequate emotional reaction is cosmetic—"Grieving is not the same as coloring your hair a new shade each month to forget you've turned over money that will be used to blow off people's heads," she warns, quite sensibly—the advice she offers is, in the end, simple, practical, and beyond argument. "I recommend the wearing of two threads of different colors," she says, "one of them, representing the feminine, red. The red thread should be worn on the left wrist, closest to the heart, and the brown or white or black thread, representing whatever endangers the feminine, the Grandmother, Earth, on the right. These will remind us to stay awake."

"We can say that the horror for the 4,000 victims of dying in those towers was inseparable from the horror of living in them," the French philosopher Jean Baudrillard observes in "The Spirit of Terrorism and Requiem for the Twin Towers" (Verso; $13). The response of European artists and intellectuals to September 11th was more varied and less unsympathetic than was generally reported. The German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen, for example, was widely quoted as calling the destruction of the World Trade Center "the greatest work of art." What he actually called it was the greatest work of art created by the Devil, by which, he later insisted, he meant to deplore it. His words were allegedly quoted out of context by a reporter attempting, for some reason, to discredit (only in Germany!) the Hamburg Music Festival, where Stockhausen's work was being performed. A symposium in the *London Review of Books* in October included condemnations of American policy (some by Americans) that seemed pointedly lacking in compassion; another, "What We Think of America," published in *Granta* last spring, produced, apart from a predictable anti-American diatribe by Harold Pinter, mostly friendly comments about the United States.

But Baudrillard's remark is representative of one segment of the European response, which has been to treat bin Laden as an entirely Western creation, modernity's demonic twin. Bin Laden, in this view, is the West's secret fantasy come to life—its desperate effort to free itself from "the simulacrum," global capitalism's society of the spectacle, which has systematically deprived people of access to the unmediated and "the Real." As Baudrillard says of the attacks, "We can say that they *did it*, but we *wished for* it." Baudrillard is therefore very taken with his notion that the collapse of the Twin Towers was a sympathetic suicide, imitating the "suicides" of the hijacked planes. The system generated its own immolation.

Blowback is a dominant trope in these analyses as well. For the European theoretical mind, though, September 11th is the consequence not of military imperialism but of economic and cultural imperialism. It is a backlash against globalization. But why impoverish by paraphrase the inimitable rhetoric of Continental "analysis"? Here is Baudrillard: "Terrorism is the act that restores an irreducible singularity to the heart of a system of generalized exchange. All the singularities (species, individuals and cultures) that have paid with their deaths for the installation of a global circulation governed by a single power are taking their revenge today through this *terrorist situational transfer*."

This is as fantastic, in its way, as Alice Walker's colored threads. It supposes a universe that (like Walker's) operates by an internal equilibrating mechanism that just happens to be in perfect synchrony with the writer's own prejudices. Globalization is evil because it destroys "singularity" by imposing a system of "generalized exchange." O.K. "Singularity" being a good thing and "generalized exchange" a bad one, the universe will automatically correct the insult to itself by having the extinct "singularities" exact "revenge" on the very agents of "generalized exchange"—the folks who work in the World Trade Center—by means of a "terrorist" act (or let us call it a "terrorist situational transfer") perpetrated by a fanatical Saudi millionaire sitting in a cave in Afghanistan. Like all superstitions, it makes perfect sense. *"For it is the world, the*



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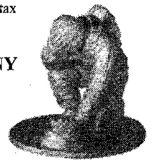

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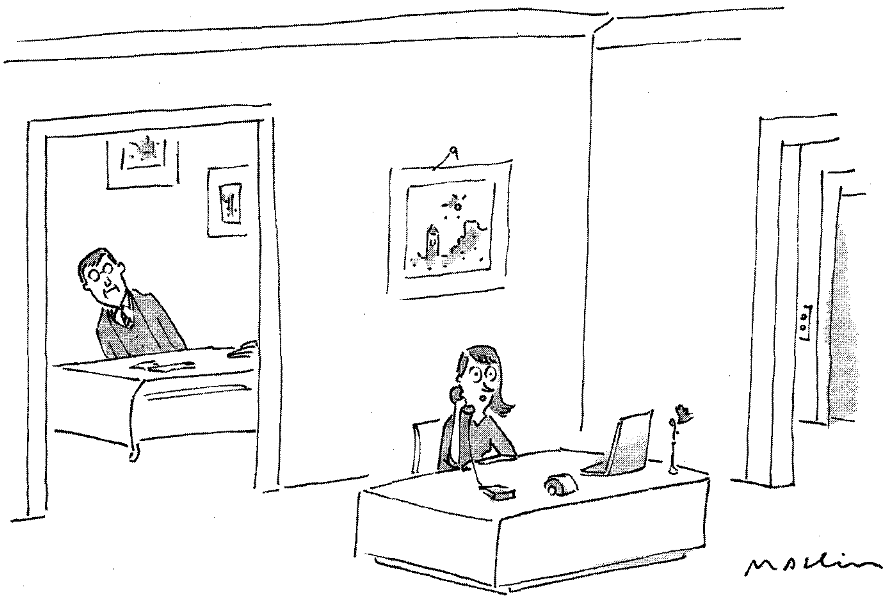

"I'm sorry, but Mr. Halibar is listing and cannot be righted."

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globe itself, which resists globalization," as Baudrillard proclaims. "Terrorism is immoral. The World Trade Center event, that symbolic challenge, is immoral, and it is a response to a globalization which is itself immoral." If this is too metaphysical for you, stick with the threads.

Some Europeans' response to September 11th is conditioned by the overriding anxiety that the United States will use international terrorism in the same way it once used international Communism: as a standing excuse to intervene in the affairs of other nations. This is why they insist on treating bin Laden as America's creation—the evil "other" that America has invented to justify its own actions around the world. During the Cold War, many European intellectuals believed that socialism, in some form, was a viable third way between Soviet totalitarianism and American capitalism. That hope crumbled with the Berlin Wall, and it left behind a kind of analytic vacuum. "Postmodern" capitalism is deadening; religious fundamentalism is deadly. Where is the third way? "Welcome to the Desert of the Real!" (Verso; $13), by the Slovene cultural theorist Slavoj Žižek, tries to address the problem. Žižek is a stimulating writer, with a knack for turning scenes from movies into little parables, and he is adept at spotting other people's nonsense. He cannot understand, for example, why the fact that the United States essentially created Al Qaeda is used as an argument against attacking it: "Would it not be much more logical to claim that it is precisely America's duty to rid us of the monster it created?"

Still, he thinks, when you look at the world now it seems that there is only America on one side and the anti-modernist right on the other. And what the anti-modernist right (including the Arab regimes) wants is what the Fascists wanted: "capitalism without capitalism"—economic development without social change and cultural permissiveness. The choice is between a capitalism of the simulacrum and a capitalism of the all-too-real. Each is the other's evil twin. Žižek does clever things with the paradoxes inherent in this situation, but in the end he is reduced to arguing that people don't need another paradigm; they just need to act, to break out of the box of received ideas, and meaning will take care of itself. This is good advice for intellectuals, maybe. In other spheres of life, the cult of the act has less appeal. It is not encouraging that Žižek names the Palestinian suicide bombers as examples of people willing to take the existential risk.

If Žižek's implication that the liberal democracies have had nothing to say for themselves in their hour of crisis is true, it has certainly not been for lack of trying. So far, the pro-America books produced in response to September 11th suffer from the conviction that anything that might be construed as criticism of the United States or its policies would be an impiety. "My America" (Scribner; $25) is the fruit of an invitation from Hugh Downs, sent to a hundred and fifty successful Americans, to explain what America means to them. A high Q rating was plainly a criterion for choosing the contributors, who include Alan Alda, Phyllis Diller, Joe Garagiola, Coretta Scott King, Joseph Lieberman, Art Linkletter, Sally Jesse Raphael, and Barbara Walters. A short essay on what America means to you sounds like the sort of thing you could write in your sleep, but, as the deadline approaches, it slowly and treacherously reveals itself to be unwritable. One wonders how many of these celebrities, staring at the empty sheet, silently cursed kindly Hugh Downs. It gives some relief to remember that many of them employ speechwriters.

The contributions to "My America" are therefore, forgivably, largely platitudes. The most alarming note is struck by Downs himself, who discloses his belief that not only does the United States "have qualities that make it superior to any other country from the standpoint of values" but "we have a duty of some sort to sell its structure and philosophy to other cultures." One did not quite expect this easy assumption of the imperial prerogative from Hugh Downs.

Yet many people did feel that it was not enough, in response to the attacks, to defend the American way of life. They felt they had to defend the *superiority* of the American way of life. Dinesh D'Souza's book is called "What's So Great About America" (Regnery; $27.95); one notes the absence of a question mark. D'Souza's target is anti-Americanism, but he does not waste time on the European kind. "The French seem to be outraged by the idea that any single nation, let alone the United States, should enjoy global domination," he observes, with feigned astonishment. Fortunately, he thinks, their views are unlikely to carry much influence: "most Americans find it hard to take the French critique seriously, coming as it does from men who carry handbags." More dangerous are the enemies within. "In many quarters in the United States, we find a deep ambivalence about exporting the American system to the rest of the world," D'Souza explains. "Not only do these critiques make patriotism problematic, but they also pose the question of whether an open society, where such criticisms are permitted and even encouraged, has the fortitude and the will to resist external assault. They also raise the issue of whether, if the critics are right, America is worth defending." We recognize the moral landscape. We are in Oliver North country.

One's ability to give credence to D'Souza's argument for the superiority of the West is a function of one's faith in a writer capable of arguing that the West is not ethnocentric because it was Westerners who came up with the concept of the noble savage. "Americans do not need to apologize for the fact that their country acts abroad in a way that is good for them," D'Souza writes. "Why should it act in any other way?" This would seem exactly the question we need to answer. But D'Souza knows what America's goal must be: "to turn Muslim fundamentalists into classical liberals." This is more tactful than the advice Ann Coulter published, after the attacks, in the online edition of *The National Review:* "We should invade their countries, kill their leaders, and convert them to Christianity." But it comes to the same thing.

Still, D'Souza harbors a sneaking respect for the terrorists. They are, after all, not afraid to proselytize for their beliefs. Six days after the attacks, D'Souza was a guest on "Politically Incorrect," where he criticized President Bush for calling the hijackers "cowards." Bill Maher, the host of the show, was only amplifying D'Souza's point when he made his notorious remark that "lobbing cruise missiles from two thousand miles away, that's cowardly." But Maher took all the flack. Ari Fleischer, the White House press secretary, held him up as an admonition to all Americans to "watch what they say, watch what they do." L. Brent Bozell, the head of the Media Research Center, called for conservatives to boycott the show. Bozell was blaming Maher. He should have looked to the enemy within.

William Bennett is less messianic about converting other nations to the American way, but Bennett has never been particularly interested in other nations. His singular obsession is the purity of American culture. It has become a kind of hypochondria—so much so that in "Why We Fight: Moral Clarity and the War on Terrorism" (Doubleday; $19.95), he expresses gratitude for the attacks, because he thinks that they will encourage us to purge our nation of the cant of relativism and multiculturalism. Peace and prosperity had softened us up. Thank God that's over! "At a terrible cost," Bennett writes, "we had been reminded of what mattered, we had had our perspective restored; this was a necessary and a salutary thing." Nonetheless, it is no time to relax our vigilance. "What I fear," he says, "is the erosion of moral clarity, and the spread of indifference and confusion, as a thousand voices discourse with energy and zeal on the questionable nature, if not the outright illegitimacy, of our methods or our cause."

As Žižek remarks, when people start talking about moral clarity, you know that mystification has set in. The world is never clear, and to reduce it to binaries—good and evil, right and wrong, with us or against us, red threads and brown threads—is to promote blind faith over understanding. Bennett's call to arm ourselves against dissent is ridiculous, not only because it reduces by one the very principles for which the country is supposed to be fighting but because there has been no significant dissent in the United States over the decision to go to war. Bennett is obliged to hunt down seemingly unpatriotic sentiments in columns in *The Nation*. It's true that the United States would be a far more interesting place if *Nation* columnists had the power to make people in the White House or the Pentagon pause, even for a nanosecond, to rethink policy decisions. But they don't.

Roger Rosenblatt was evidently not on the A-list for Hugh Downs's anthology. It is a pity, because he could easily have written an essay in his sleep on what America means to him; in fact, he has written thirty of them. The book is "Where We Stand: 30 Reasons for Loving Our Country" (Harcourt; $16.95), and it is of a mushiness to make "Goodnight Moon" seem possibly a shade too contentious. God sheds his grace on everything that Rosenblatt sees. "The American rivers," he writes, for example, "show us a country equally capable of generosity and advancement, of

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glorying in and drowning in freedom, and of immense courage in the name of right." If you can make sense of that, try this, from an essay on abortion: "As with all else pertaining to this issue, one's moral position depends on the direction in which one is looking. Yet both points of view are inspired by optimism, and both see life in America as the best of choices."

Each essayette has been given an archly comic title, designed to draw us into the game of making everything gemütlich. For instance: "We Dig That Hokey, Corny Presidential Talk: In which the author makes an impassioned yet dignified plea for more and more bullshit." This one proposes that "Lincoln was a supremely corny speaker—at least he would be judged so today. He began a noted speech at a battlefield with references to liberty and the proposition of equality. How hokey can you get?" The exasperating thing is that Rosenblatt knows better than this. E. B. White had a similar vein of faux populism that he tapped into sometimes. Once was enough.

What sense does it make, anyway, to say that an entire country is good or bad? Is Italy good or bad? Is Mexico, or Australia, or Argentina? Would we be interested in a collection of essays on "What Norway Means to Me"? Such a collection might, in fact, arrive at something like a point of view, but the whole meaning of American life is that there is no such thing as "the meaning of American life." As the British historian John Gray pointed out last spring, in the "America" issue of *Granta*, "For every attitude that is supposed to be distinctively American one can find an opposite stance that is no less so. . . . There is no such thing as an essentially American world view—any more than there is an essentially American landscape. Anyone who thinks otherwise shows they have not grasped the most important fact about America, which is that it is unknowable." This seems a remarkably obvious point, but Gray appears to be practically the only person in the past twelve months to have made it.

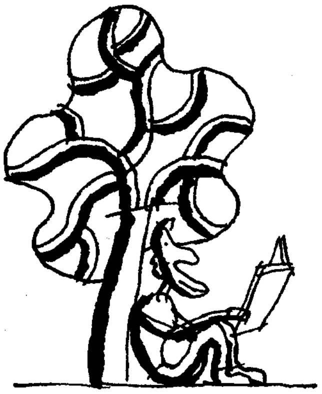
For Americans who do not keep track of their country's overseas adventures, which is to say, most Americans, the attacks of September 11th seemed to come, in every sense, from out of the blue. The assumption that these were attacks on "our way of life" was instinctive, because there was, at the time, no other way for most people to understand them. The assumption is alarming and comforting at the same time—alarming because it wounds the American sense of innocence, but comforting because the actuality is a lot messier. The attacks were (as Baudrillard might put it) a singular event, and getting to the bottom of the circumstances that led up to them is a game of historical pick-up-sticks. They include not only the Carter Administration's decision to bleed the Soviets to death in an Afghan war (a policy that arguably succeeded beyond anyone's wildest imaginings) but also bin Laden's relations with the Saudi royal family; the decision to place American military bases in Saudi Arabia; the desire to construct an American-controlled natural-gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to the sea, which would run through Afghanistan; the Saudi practice of paying protection money to Islamic militants; a possible rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran; and all the usual fluctuations in balance-of-power considerations—the sort of fluctuations that made Saddam Hussein America's friend one day and its archenemy the next. In the heap of elements at play in the September 11th attacks, the American soul is pretty far down in the pile.

That is the stick many people wanted to pick up, though. One reason it is so hard to describe the "character" that September 11th revealed is that it involves us in paradox. There was spontaneous patriotism—the flags, the "United We Stand" posters, the widespread support for the war in Afghanistan. There was spontaneous compassion—the flowers around firehouses, the donations of money and blood, the concern for the victims as individuals. If you try to link these responses in a formula, you get something like: Americans are willing to fight, and even to die, for the belief that no one should be made to die for a belief. And: Americans hold it to be a transcendent truth that it is possible to live a good life without loyalty to a transcendent cause. The formulations are fuzzy because "a way of life" has many aspects. There is no perfect clarity. Let us be clear about that. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

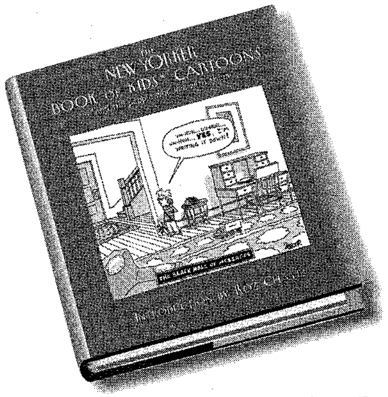
Blood of Victory, *by Alan Furst (Random House; $24.95).* Furst's "Kingdom of Shadows" was a sprawling, somewhat fog-bound work that seemed primarily concerned with demonstrating the author's virtuosic ability to describe scenes of espionage in European capitals. Although some of that novel's minor characters resurface here, "Blood of Victory" is a far more focussed thriller that revolves around a plan to disrupt the flow of Romanian oil to the Third Reich. As usual, Furst adheres strictly to the rules of the genre: the protagonist, a Russian expatriate writer, is seduced into service both by the prospect of heroism and by a mysterious Frenchwoman, and embarks on a globe-trotting, spy-versus-spy adventure. But his debts to convention work in his favor. Densely atmospheric and genuinely romantic, the novel is most reminiscent of the Hollywood films of the forties, when moral choices were rendered not in black-and-white but in smoky shades of gray.

Edison's Eve, *by Gaby Wood (Knopf; $24).* Embodying the confusions between what is "lifelike" and what is alive, robots have always held an anxious fascination. When eighteenth-century physicians described the body as a complex piece of machinery, the stage was set for inventors like Jacques de Vaucanson, who thrilled Paris with a flute-playing android, and Wolfgang von Kempelen, whose chess-playing automaton took on the best players of its time. Deftly balancing historical detail with provocative meditations on the reception accorded such marvels, Wood then traces the development of subsequent imitations of life, such as the talking doll designed by Thomas Edison and the magic-filled films of Georges Méliès. Her contention that in the twentieth century human freaks came to seem more uncanny than machines may not entirely persuade, but the exotic particulars—especially those pertaining to a group of circus midgets called the Doll Family—more than make up for this inconsistency.



47 Roses, *by Peter Sheridan (Viking; $21.95).* In this marvellous, nervy sequel to his childhood memoir, "44: Dublin Made Me," the Irish theatre impresario Peter Sheridan revisits his parents' marriage and discovers, after his father's death, that an Englishwoman whom he had known as a family friend was also his father's mistress on and off for almost fifty years. Sheridan's prose style is Chekhov by way of Monty Python and Rabelais, and this extravagantly sympathetic portrait of all the parties involved—including the ferocious, torch-bearing Doris—is hilarious.

Savage Reprisals, *by Peter Gay (Norton; $24.95).* The premise of the latest work by this distinguished historian is that novels should not be used as factual sources by academics. Gay musters evidence to demonstrate that Dickens was so prejudiced by his own lawsuit that his depiction of the Court of Chancery in "Bleak House" ignored reforms already in place; that Flaubert's characterization of the bourgeoisie as uncultivated was unfounded; and that Thomas Mann's Buddenbrook family, though true to type in some ways, was the product of authorial ambivalence and guilt. And yet one wonders whom, precisely, Gay is arguing against. Certainly, like the author, most of us have had quite enough of the relativism of postmodernists who label history as fiction. But are there many reputable scholars who are mistaking works of the imagination for reliable primary sources? If only Gay had explored at greater length his most compelling suggestion—that novelists compose their fictions as acts of revenge.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THE CURRENT CINEMA

FEMMES FATALES

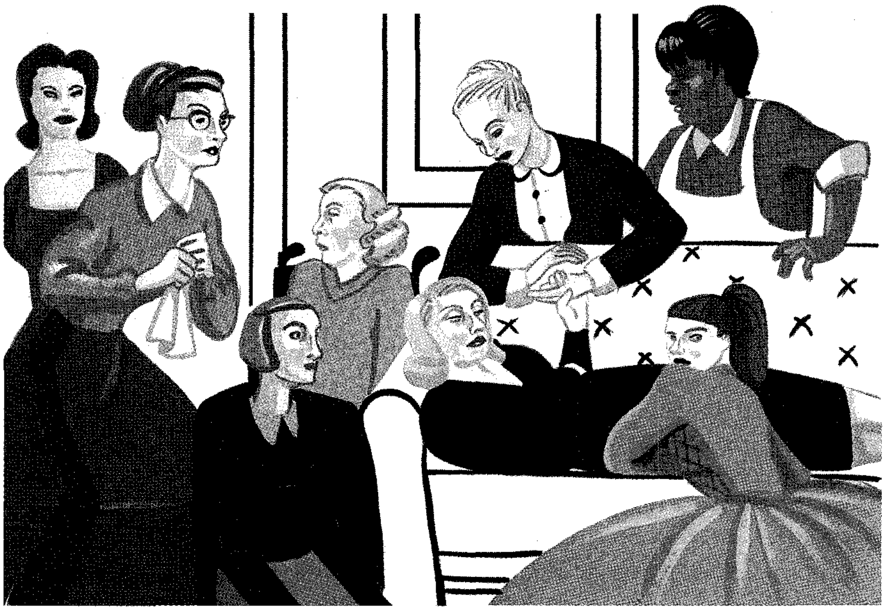
Music and mystery in "8 Women."

BY ANTHONY LANE

If you find yourself in need of a tonic in the coming weeks, and discover that a close friend has stolen your copy of "Singin' in the Rain," you could do worse than plan a trip to "8 Women." François Ozon's new picture is a tonic of sorts, but you should be warned that at no time does it taste anything other than most peculiar. Put simply, it is a cocktail: a hot-hued, postmodern, nineteen-fifties murder-mystery musical hen party. You may be left with doubts about Ozon as a director, but one thing is for sure: he'd make a hell of a bartender.

The setting is virginal and unashamedly fake—purest Agatha Christie. The hush of a snowbound country house, where deer nibble foliage on cue, is broken by the small matter of a murder (some male of the species named Marcel, who really doesn't count), and also, more important, by a volcanic irruption: the arrival, from nowhere, of a vast, untamable horde of famous French actresses. Each is playing a part, of course, and the rapport between their various personae will form the emotional clutter of the film, yet we are constantly reminded—it would be a grievous breach of etiquette if we dared to forget—that what we are gazing at is a constellation.

The wise thing, I guess, is to name the stars in alphabetical order, since any other system of ranking would cause one or more of them to explode in a solar flare. Fanny Ardant plays Pierrette, the sister of the deceased, and an object lesson in how to appear both louche and statuesque; Emmanuelle Béart plays Louise, a maid, which in her case is not to be confused with a maiden; Danielle Darrieux plays Mamy, the matriarch of the household, whose dignity does not prevent her from shaking the dregs of a brandy bottle into her glass; Catherine Deneuve plays Gaby, one of Mamy's two daughters, and the strangely ungrieving widow of Marcel; Isabelle Huppert plays Augustine, the other daughter, a sticklike spinster who survives on a diet of romantic fiction; Virginie Ledoyen plays Suzon, one of Gaby's two daughters, given to random twirls of her full pink skirt; Firmine Richard plays Mme. Chanel, the kindly housekeeper who knows too much; and Ludivine Sagnier plays Catherine, the baby of the clan—Gaby's younger daughter and Suzon's little sister, who starts the movie in pajamas and never looks back.



Eight famous French actresses clamor to be the prime suspect in a murder.

ALISON SEIFFER

Only the last two actresses will hold no place in the shrine of the average Francophile, though Firmine Richard may ring a bell if you remember the calm black cleaning lady who fell into bed with Daniel Auteuil in "Romuald et Juliette." Ozon plainly worships the very notion of the grande dame, as anyone who saw his tactful, adventurous handling of Charlotte Rampling in "Under the Sand" will recall, and the new movie allows him both to honor and to deride his own devotion. In place of the unironic horrors of the Rampling film, "8 Women" is arch, camp, and so exhilarated with self-consciousness that, by the end, you wonder how the damn thing managed to not vanish up its own artifice.

The plot is absurdly fiendish, and therefore to be dusted aside. Marcel is, to all appearances, the victim of a monstrous crime; as somebody shrewdly points out, the handle of a dagger protruding from his back tends to rule out suicide. The question is not "Who did it?" so much as "Who cares who did it?," for each of the women is clamoring to be the prime suspect, merrily whipping herself into a froth of motivation. The movie is by definition dickless, there being no detective on hand to untangle the devices and desires; indeed, one can readily imagine M. Poirot casting a glance at this zoo of malice and scampering away, his bachelor's mustache wilting with hormonal fright. The story is unwrapped like a birthday present, layer upon layer of tissue-thin revelation peeling away; we learn that one of the women is pregnant, that another is not the true daughter of her parent, and, above all, that a healthy proportion of the eight are nourishing a furtive lust for one or more of the others. "You need treatment!" Gaby cries, hearing a confession of vice.

She should talk. At the risk of tripping off a stampede of the nation's voyeurs, I have to say that, for sheer fetishistic whoopie, there is very little to rival the sight of Catherine Deneuve and Fanny Ardant getting into a catfight, all hisses and claws, then slowly sinking to the floor and starting to stroke each other's whiskers. (To achieve a similar effect here, you would have to pay Faye Dunaway to make out with Jane Fonda. At the time of writing, this seems unlikely.) The encounter is too knowing to be sexy, but the knowingness makes it funny. The costume designer, Pascaline Chavanne, is quoted in an interview as saying that Emmanuelle Béart, already clad in a maid's outfit, "suggested higher boots." An excellent idea. From the first shot, with the credits unfurling in pink over a chandelier, Ozon makes it clear that, like Pedro Almodóvar, he is tuned in to the Technicolor extremes of fifties Hollywood, and that there are lurid laughs to be wrung from the histrionics of Douglas Sirk. The difference is that a film like "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" gave its characters the liberty of excess; they looked like Pop art, but Almodóvar didn't hang them on the wall—they stalked around, howling or braying, of their own free will. Ozon's eightsome, on the other hand, are going through his motions; at the close, they line up and join hands, as if to take a curtain call.

So why, at that moment, should audiences here feel the urge to follow their French counterparts and applaud? ("8 Women" was a startling hit over there.) The answer lies partly in the clash of tones; when Mamy denounces her daughter as "*Fille ingrate!*," she could be declaiming Racine, and there is a dark thrill to be had from watching all these manias being corseted into the demands of French rhetoric and conduct. The battle is there in every hook and eye; once you catch Deneuve, buttoned into a bottle-green dress, settling down on a mustard sofa in the opening scene, it is but a short hop to Fanny Ardant shrugging off a silk-lined black coat to reveal a dress of insane scarlet. She looks like a vampire advertising lipstick. Then, baring her fangs, she begins to sing. "8 Women" brims with song; people turn to the camera and belt out jazz standards, smoky croonings, and, in Ardant's case, "Can't Give You Anything (But My Love)," recast to the rhythm of a striptease. They also dance, swivelling and exchanging mysterious hand signals, as if miming their driving test.

All this is done smilingly, without embarrassment, and is thus guaranteed to embarrass those viewers who are struggling to place the movie as they would a misremembered friend. Yet something of substance does creep through Ozon's creation, sneaking up on us past the seamed stockings and the panoply of kitsch. It is there in the unfeigned regret of Isabelle Huppert, discarding her terrifying spectacles (think Burt Lancaster in "Sweet Smell of Success"), and delivering a Françoise Hardy number, head-on to the lens; it is there when Béart unpins her hair and shakes it loose, whereupon we cut to a cheesy oil painting of the youthful Deneuve on the wall and realize that the two images match—that the mantle of perfection has been passed. That is why Ozon, though an incurable movie buff, is not just a movie buff, and it would be a pity if his film attracted buffs alone; he need make no apology for all his glittering players, because in their jostling for eminence, both inside and beyond the film, we sense the eternal face-off of beauty against the beast of time. Nobody is more touching in this regard than Danielle Darrieux, her soft wrinkles unable to erode the exquisite heroines she once incarnated for Max Ophuls, in "La Ronde" and "Madame de . . ." In "8 Women," she—still possessing the most ringing of the eight voices—sings the final song, which tells us that "there is no happy love." Ophuls to the core. In short, this film is not quite the frozen and brittle comedy that it appears to be, and, if you can stomach it the first time, you may experience a baffling wish to see it again—to inspect this crystalline curiosity from another angle. On two occasions, the subtitles employ the phrase "to make-believe," but listen to the original French: "*On fait du cinéma.*" Ozon's is the art of the white lie, told in blinding color, and tinged with surprising truths. If you believe "8 Women," you'll believe anything. ♦

The New Yorker (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for six combined issues: Feb. 18 & 25, Apr. 22 & 29, June 17 & 24, Aug. 19 & 26, Oct. 14 & 21, Dec. 23 & 30) by The Condé Nast Publications Inc. (4 Times Square, N.Y., N.Y. 10036-6592), which is a subsidiary of Advance Publications, Inc. Vol. LXXVIII, No. 27, September 16, 2002. Periodical postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Publications Mail Agreement No. 40644503. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office.

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LATE SEPTEMBER

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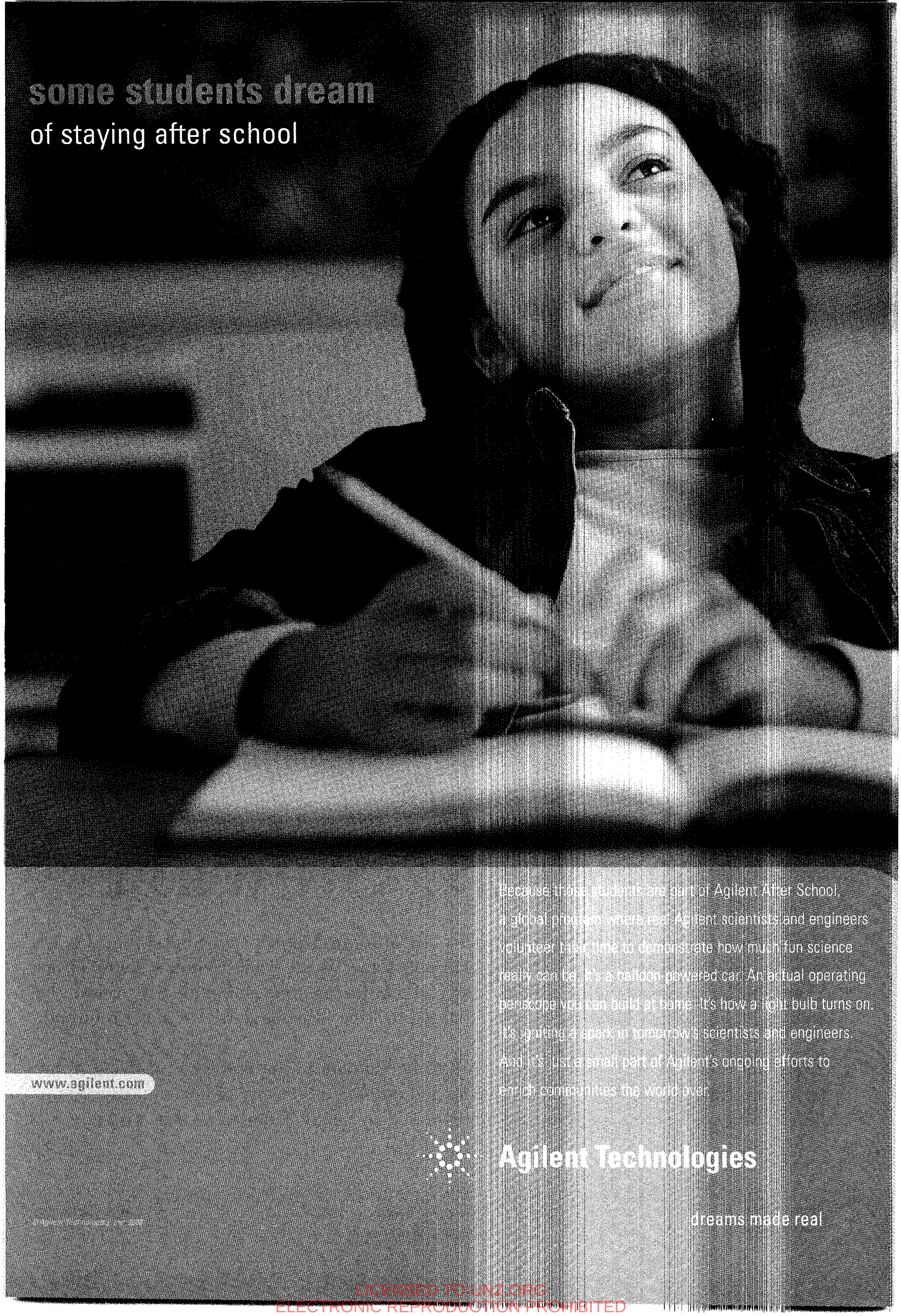
The bored seagull lifts a leg now and then
And forgets to put it down.
There is a menace in the air
Of tragedies in the making.

Last night you thought you heard television
In the house next door.
You were sure it was some new
Horror they were reporting,
So you went out to find out.
Barefoot, wearing just shorts.
It was only the sea sounding weary
After so many lifetimes
Of pretending to be rushing off somewhere
And never getting anywhere.

This morning, it felt like Sunday.
The heavens did their part
By casting no shadow along the boardwalk
Or the row of vacant cottages,
Among them a small church
With a dozen gray tombstones huddled close
As if they, too, had the shivers.

—*Charles Simic*



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Heart of a Soldier

A STORY OF LOVE, HEROISM,
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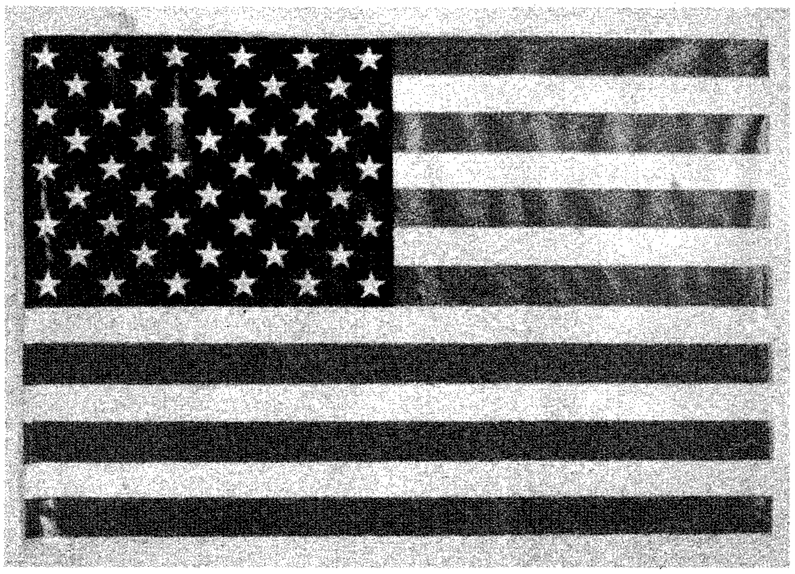

James B. Stewart

Rick Rescorla was in charge of security for Morgan Stanley. On September 11, he successfully helped 2,700 of its employees out of the World Trade Center's South Tower. Then, thinking perhaps of the soldiers who had died in his arms and of his wife, Susan, he went back and began climbing the tower stairs, looking for stragglers. He never returned.

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